1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 The immediate need is for further field stud-
ies, for which there is considerable urgency. We
have, in the Ituri Forest, a people who are still
living one of the earliest forms of life lived by
man: hunting and gathering. The extent to
which the Mbuti live this life varies from one
group to another, but we cannot expect to find
a pure hunting and gathering economy among
•177 them much longer. For some thousands of years
175 the Pygmy lived this life free from any outside
[174] influence. In historic times various village tribes
invaded his forest, bringing different cultures
and different economies with them. More re-
cently the Pygmies have been in contact with
European civilization, which has already driven
one major road, and a number of secondary
roads, right through the forest. Luckily, no ef-
fective attempt was made by the Belgians, until
the last two years of their administration, to
change the Mbuti way of life, and there is still
ample forest to permit a hunting and gathering
177 economy. What emerges from a study of this
182 [P.147 B]

[P.147-C]
particular contact situation is not only the remarkable 177
adaptability of the Mbuti to the 182
changing world around them, but also the superficiality
of that adaptability, and their much
more profound resistance to any influence that
strikes into the heart of their forest world and
forest life. This, however, is a matter for another
work.

Physical anthropology has been entirely excluded 114
from the survey because of its highly
specialized nature. A number of such specialists 14
have worked in the Ituri area, however, notably 128
Gusinde (1942, 1948), Jadin (1936, 1938), and
Julien (1934, 1954). Schebesta (1938) has also
made a physiometrical study among the Mbuti.

The only changes that have been made in the
original survey have been minor literary alterations, 128
the addition of a few footnotes or inserted 114
comments, the addition of one or two post-1956
references, and a revision of the terminology
used. For "Efe" and "Sua," for instance, we
now use the terms "archer" and "net hunter" 101
respectively, and in place of "Negro" we use 128
"villager," thus stressing throughout the significance
of the economic rather than the linguistic
or racial differential.

SOURCE MATERIAL

[P.149-A]

HISTORICAL SOURCES

114 ONE OF THE MOST STRIKING THINGS about a survey
175 of ancient and early sources concerning the
177 African Pygmies is the way it shows how, from
the time these people first entered the recorded
scene, in Egypt of the Sixth Dynasty, our knowledge
of them decreased steadily until the late
nineteenth century. To the ancient Egyptians
the existence of Pygmies was a matter of fact.
They are referred to as "Dancers of God" and
as dwellers in the "land of trees" (Schebesta,
1933, 17; 1952, 11); they are placed on the
[101] southern borders of Sudan. A tomb of the Sixth
Dynasty at Beni Hassan bears a painting of
representatives of conquered nations, among
which is a perfectly recognizable likeness of a
Pygmy, designated Aka—a name by which the
northernmost Pygmies are still known today.
Yet, until the turn of the present century, the
modern Western world believed the Pygmy to
be a myth. From Beni Hassan the scene shifts
to the Pompeian parietal paintings which depict
typical Pygmy scenes, with a forest camp of
beehive-shaped huts, and also a scene showing
Pygmies along the Nile.

114 175 177 Herodotus (1866, vol. 2, sect. 32) in the fifth century B.C. reports an expedition of Nasamonians to discover the source of the Nile. They cross a vast desert and, while resting at an oasis, are captured by diminutive men, "under the middle height."

Homer (1864, vol. 3, 3–7) introduces an element of myth when he talks of fighting between the cranes and the "Pygmaean race" to the south, but Aristotle (1910, vol. 8, sect. 2) sees fit, for some reason, to assert quite categorically that Pygmies do in fact live in the land "from which flows the Nile"; he adds that they live in caves.

An isolated reference in the sixth century comes from the Emperor Justinian's ambassador who, on his way to Ethiopia, on an island off the east African coast, came across a tribe of Pygmies speaking an unknown language (unknown even to local inhabitants). That is about the last reference to Pygmies as human beings for some 10 centuries. In the fourteenth century the cartographer who drew up the Hereford Mappa Mundi still placed the Pygmies near the

[P.149-B]

[P.149-C]

source of the Nile, although in his secondary 114
role as theologian he depicted them as monsters, 175
with their faces in their breasts or their heads 177
below their shoulders. He labels them as troglodytes.

Battel (1625, vol. 2, 983) refers to the existence of a nation of dwarfs and places them in the land of the Yobbi, north of the Sette River. He calls them "Dongo," and it is in this area where Du Chaillu (1867, 1890) discovered the "Obongo" Pygmies in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Other seventeenth-century reports by Portuguese explorers describe what seem to be relatively pure Pygmy races who apparently brought ivory down to the west coast traders. Unfortunately, these explorers had vivid imaginations and interspersed their descriptions with most unlikely information, such as the power of these little people to become invisible, the only explanation they could

find for how the Pygmies could kill elephant. In 114
this way belief in the existence of real Pygmy 175
races in Africa was only further discredited; 177
so much so that an anatomist named Tyson obtained a skeleton of one of these fabulous beings and, after careful examination, wrote a treatise (Tyson, 1699) showing that it was quite clear that "Pygmies" were, in fact, not human beings but apes. He had good grounds for this assertion, because the skeleton he examined, and which survived until recently at the British Museum (Natural History) in South Kensington, England, was that of a chimpanzee. He rounds off his discourse in the following general terms: "The most diligent enquiries of late into all parts of the inhabited world could never discover any such puny diminutive race of mankind." His explanation of the "fables" was that travelers had mistaken apes for men (Windle, 1894).

From the seventeenth century to the nineteenth there seems to have been a complete silence. Then follows a succession of explorers, travelers, administrators, and anthropologists who finally established the fact that Pygmies did exist and were, indeed, human. But that, and their approximate distribution, is about all they do tell us. Well into the twentieth century we get fanciful adventurers seriously observing

114 apes swinging about in the treetops and de-
175 scribing them as Pygmies.

.177 The material provided by these nineteenth-century explorers is valuable, however, for an
114 understanding of contemporary writings. Some
175 of them, such as Speke (1864) and Stanley
101 (1879, 1890), made little more than passing reference to the "dwarfs," as they were usually called. Schweinfurth (1874) is generally acknowledged as being the first to establish beyond a doubt that there was indeed a race of such people in central Africa and to give us some real information about them, particularly concerning the association of the Aka (northernmost) Pygmies, as mercenary soldiers, with the Mangbetu tribe. He was also among the first to throw in some of the many "red herrings" that have distracted even the most recent anthropologists from a strictly scientific study of the people, leading them into the speculative realms of origin, connection between Pygmies and the Bushmen of South Africa, and degree of originality of Pygmy culture.

[p.155-C]

stress [pick out?] that which was pygmy."[1] 114

Schebesta's division of the Ituri Pygmies into 114 three linguistic groups is another result of his 97 preoccupation with the problem of the sepa- 101 rateness of the Pygmy and villager and the alleged anteriority of the former. He sets out to find an original Pygmy language and claims to have found it among the Efe archers. For this reason he regards them as the "purest" Mbuti. He also, of necessity, believes that their culture 114 is the purest, being least affected by contact 177 with the villagers. Yet from his account it is plain that the Pygmies he describes live in far closer association with neighboring villagers than do other Pygmy groups elsewhere in the Ituri Forest. This whole question of origin and [194] anteriority is so highly speculative, resting, as it must, largely on conjecture, that again we prefer our own more factual basis of classification according to hunting technique, if only as a temporary measure, until we have sufficient information to make a classification according to structural principles.

[1] [See footnote, bottom of p.155-D --Analyst]

With regard to their "purity," it is difficult to 101
say much, particularly as it seems more satisfactory
to study them for what they are without
reference to their supposed origin. They stand 101
to the villager, however, in the general, apparent 177
client-patron relationship found among
most Mbuti throughout the Ituri, though this
varies in detail from one area to another. It
would seem that they are a great deal less
closely attached to their village patrons than
the archers described by Schebesta, and spend
far less time in the vicinity of the village. At the
same time they themselves, and the villagers,
report other bands whose association with
village settlements is still less regular. The material
to hand, however, does reveal some new
facts concerning this relationship, and, although
interpretation of these facts can be made only
with regard to this particular band (the disadvantage
of such a small-scale study), at least
it is more certain for that specific instance and
may indicate similar possibilities elsewhere.

[P.158-D]

bodyguard for the new king. Such isolated 174
references indicate a long-established association 177
between the two peoples, and that the 571
original nature of the association was a military one. Casati (1891), Burrows (1898), Ward (1910), Schweinfurth (1874), and others, write of the employment of the Pygmies by the villagers as spies, scouts, mercenary soldiers, and guides. Putnam in his earlier notes mentions frequently coming across references among the older Pygmies to this relationship, which of course came to an end when the Belgian authorities stopped intertribal warfare.

Legends from the Epulu area (Turnbull, 174
1959) show scant interest in the questions of origin and history, but that here also both Pygmy and villager agree that the Pygmy is the original inhabitant of the forest and is, to a certain extent, feared and respected as such by the villager. No legends from this area of the Ituri or from any other so far reported (Schebesta, 1936b, 340; Joset, 1948, 25–56, 137–157) show that the Pygmies or villagers have any concept of the Pygmies' originating elsewhere than in this northeast corner of the Congo, nor do they reveal any doubt in the minds of these people that the Pygmies were the original inhabitants of that forest.

Socio-cultural change has been taking place 178
ever since the first villager invasions, several hundred years ago, but most rapidly in the past half century. The progress of this change can be

[P.162-D]

[P. 163-A]

178 studied both from the material available and by further field work and should make an interesting contribution to the study of acculturation and plural society problems. This change, still taking place, is likely to increase in depth and speed as the Ituri Forest is further exploited by [177] a central government. The Pygmies have constantly been thrown into closer contact with the villagers, and both have been brought into more immediate contact with the European. As the Pygmy becomes more and more economically dependent on these alien groups, the last remnants of his earlier social system will become modified and finally disappear. Up to the moment of Congo independence, the Mbuti were not subject to taxation, a fact that did not meet with their uncritical approval. The "pros and

[P.164-C]

that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." 000

The forest throughout is interlaced with 133
rivers and streams, and the terrain is gently un- 182
dulating. These rivers, and the larger of the [166]
streams, seem to form effective natural bound- [823]
aries and may well influence migratory ten- [484]
dencies, as the Pygmy both dislikes large expanses of water and lacks the knowledge of how
to bridge them. Reports of journalists and [491]
others of Pygmy bridge-building activities [177]
(Cotlow, 1956) probably result from recent attempts, by both villagers and European movie makers, to teach the Pygmies how to build swing bridges. Putnam (1948, 325) asserts that the Pygmy probably never has to go more
than 100 yards to find water. Temperatures 132
throughout the year vary only between a low of 70° F. at night and a possible high of 80° F.
during the day. The forest varies with respect 137
to underbrush but on the whole is unimpeded virgin growth, with a carpet of leaf mold between the trees. Where villagers have made a clearing, however, there is thickly tangled undergrowth.

[P. 165-C]

Among Putnam's net hunters, a more fre- 237
quent use of skin, of late, has been in the form 854
of a sling for carrying babies, but this is still
rare.

Clay and stone are likewise ignored as pos- 325
sible raw materials, nor are there any reports [317]
that the Mbuti worked metal at any time. [316]
Apart from an exceptional case among the net [177] •
hunters, quoted by Schebesta (1933), such [411]
metal as they require for knife and ax blades, [412]
and for arrow and spearheads, they obtain al- [439]
ready worked from the villagers.

If the villager supplies the handle as well as 412
the triangular blade, Putnam (1948, 326) writes 284
that the invariable method of hafting is to burn
a hole through the wood to take the narrow end
of the blade. If the blade alone is supplied, the
Pygmy takes a thin sapling or a light branch,
splits it, and, without removing the bark,
lashes the blade in place with twine or rattan. If 412
a Pygmy is using an ax up in a tree, he will
always choose one of his own hafting, because
it is lighter. Both men and women use these
axes. Putnam (1948, 326) writes that they
never use adzes, which are the chief tools of the
village woodworkers.

[ARCHERS]

[P.167-C]

ground on four short forked branches. More 352
often the sticks, or simply leaves, are laid on
the ground to make a bed. There may also be a
wooden stool, given by or stolen from the villagers, or a rough chair made from stout saplings lashed together with vine. Meat-drying 417
racks (Fig. 12) are built over smouldering fires 251
to preserve meat for barter.

UTENSILS

Cooking utensils, clay pots, and heavy 415
wooden mortars are obtained from the villagers 412
(Fig. 4). The first-mentioned are never made by 177
the Mbuti, but Schebesta says that many [439]
archers now make mortars for themselves.
There may also be wooden plates of village
origin, baskets, and basketry winnowing trays.
All metal knife and ax blades (Figs. 13–14) also 412
come from the villagers, and, like the cooking 177
utensils, these foreign importations are said to [439]
have become indispensable to the archers.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, 412
some unhafted, always worn in the belt by 177 •
women and used for preparing food and for
sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in
both gathering activities and in cooking. Other 41
items that might be found in or around an Efe
archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a [534]
bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6–9), a dog bell [231]
(Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and [276]
sometimes used in the search for honey, an [854]
ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe [789]
bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children,
and a few personal possessions such as hunting
charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the 285
basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the archers 252
for extraction of juice from fruits.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION 291

Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn
tucked between the legs. The upper part of the
body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin
cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Basketry
caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur
bands which may also be worn on the arm.
Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded 301
bark. Both men and women may wear, around
the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which
small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms
are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers

[P.167-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.168-B]

301 are also used for adornment. Both men and women may wear combs in their hair. Sometimes the Mbuti make such combs themselves, more often they are borrowed or stolen from the villagers (Fig. 15a).

BODY DECORATION

304 • 177 302 Body mutilation is practiced occasionally in imitation of the villagers. Schebesta mentions as a peculiar "Bambuti" custom the plucking of eyelashes, also the shaving of the head for esthetic effect. Men may tattoo their foreheads; 304 women, their faces, stomachs, and backs. Teeth may be chipped, and sometimes women pierce their nasal septa, lips, and earlobes. Cicatrization is very rare. 302 All Mbuti, says Schebesta, like to paint the body for esthetic effect as opposed to the magical significance of facial painting. [386] White, red, and black are the colors used, the dyes being obtained from clay and certain

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 ●
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[ARCHERS]

[P.174-A]

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411
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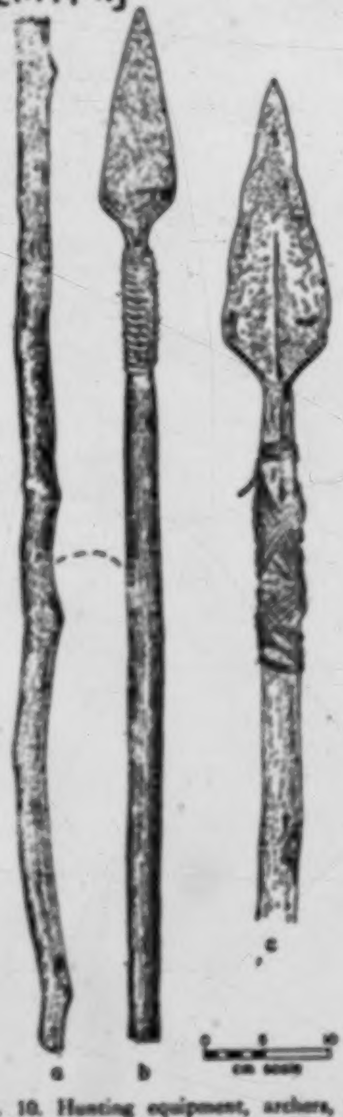

FIG. 10. Hunting equipment, archers, Central Ituri. a–b. Spear, of village origin and villager hafted; probably *Bira*. c. Spear, hafted by Mbuti. All blades for spears come *from* the villagers, though Mbuti *frequently* rehaft spear, ax, and adze blades, to suit their needs.

P
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● [177]
[434]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 ●
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[P·175-D]

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412

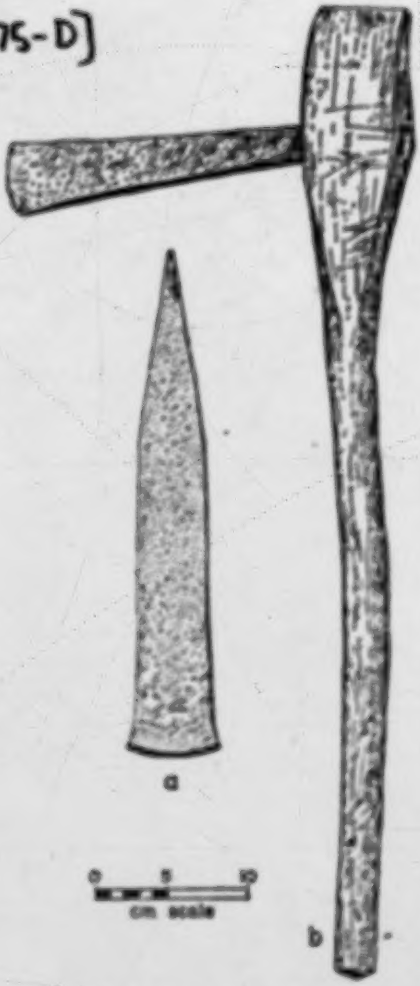

FIG. 14. Household utensils of metal, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Ax blade. A common gift made by villagers to Mbuti, nominally under their control, on the occasion of an Mbuti marriage. b. Ax, used by Mbuti mainly for the cutting of light saplings with which they make their house frames; Bira hafting.

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[177]
[571]
[431] ●

[ARCHERS]

[p.176-77]

262 boos, mostly acquired during initiation, not connected with the clan totem. These two classes of taboos are responsible *for* what food restrictions there are.

Trade

433
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•177
22 The food quest is, in Schebesta's words, the alpha and omega of Mbuti economy. It is a day-to-day economy. The supposed uncertainty of adequate supply is given as the reason for the alleged dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers. At times the Mbuti have no food; at others, they have an excess. But living in a symbiotic relationship with the villagers, the Pygmies are able to maintain a steady diet, relying on the villagers in times of shortage and in times of plenty supplying them with forest produce. According to Schebesta, their relationship is based on this exchange. The Pygmy not only has come to rely on village plantations to supplement his own inadequate diet, but he has come to rely on villager-manufactured tools and utensils. Jadin (1936) says that the Pygmies know no resources other than those available through hunting and gathering, despite villager domination.

[ARCHERS]

439 This trade relationship has been noticed by
many of the earlier travelers, some of whom
177 referred to it as "silent trade" (notably Bur-
rows, 1898), while others found it to be quite
[114] open (Lloyd, 1899). But Schebesta (1941) is
inconsistent in attributing it to the inadequacy
of the environment, which, in the same work, he
claims is responsible, through its very abun-
dance, for the lack of advance in Pygmy cul-
ture. Nor does he indicate precisely how the
[613] trading is carried out. He says that there is,
however, a definite hereditary relationship
between Efe archer and Lese villager lineages.

SOCIAL LIFE

594

Family Organization

[342] Individual families each have their own bee-
hive- or tunnel-shaped hut, a stick frame hung
with phrynium leaves (p. 167). Schebesta (1933,
219–220; 1952, 154) reports once having seen a
gigantic windscreen housing several families in
an otherwise normal camp. Although each
[621] family emphasizes its individuality by separate
residence, as a social unit it is far less significant
[613] than the band (a patrilineage, according to
Schebesta) of which it is a part and outside
which it could not exist.

[P. 176-B]

[ARCHERS]

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881
177

Initiation

Schebesta (1948, 467 ff.; 1952, 265 ff.) gives no information concerning the initiation of girls among the archers. He does, however, describe at some length the initiation, accompanied by circumcision, of boys, according to the villager rite known as *nkumbi*. His earlier account, in "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri," is, by his own admission, drawn largely from Mbuti and villager informants throughout the forest. He was able to have only fleeting glimpses (*"flüchtigen Einblicke"*; Schebesta, 1948, 475) of parts of *nkumbi* festivals among the Ngwana, Byeru, Bali, and forest Bira, but his observations, he says, confirmed what he had been told. In 1949 he had an opportunity to see more of a single *nkumbi*, details of which he records (Schebesta, 1952), but this was among net-hunting Mbuti. Consequently, we lack precise information concerning the *nkumbi* among archers. Opinion among different groups of Mbuti varies as to the origin of the custom; some claim to have practiced it before the villagers, some say that they have adopted it only recently. There are

[P 179-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P.179-C]

even Mbuti groups in which apparently it is practiced among themselves but without circumcision. 881 177

The *nkumbi* takes place approximately every six years, says Schebesta, and each initiation has a specific name, usually connected with some outstanding incident connected with that particular occasion. It is inaugurated on the decision of the village lineage head who invites the Mbuti to take part. An essential feature of the *nkumbi* throughout the Ituri is this joint participation of Mbuti and villager. [613]

The *nkumbi* (Efe: *leku*) takes place in a special camp in the forest, some distance from the village. A large conical hut is built (Schebesta, 1948, here follows a description of a southern Lese initiation), on one side of which is the raised sleeping place of the initiates (Efe: *bemu*), and on the other, the fireplace and quarters of the elders who will guard and teach the boys. All the arrangements are in the hands of the villager lineage head (*avitiri*).

]

[ARCHERS]

The candidates, Mbuti and villager, are led before the operator and are, if brave enough, circumcised standing up; otherwise, they are laid on the ground and held down. Next to every Lese youth stands a Pygmy boy, who is circumcised immediately after him. The two enter into a lasting bond of *karí* brotherhood. As the circumcision is completed, the Lese blows his signal horn, and the Mbuti his *segbe* pipe. The women in the village hear this and reply with a shout of joy at this sign that their sons have now become men. By this joint ceremony the *karí* stand in an even closer relationship to each other than do blood brothers.

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[534]
[202]

Schebesta gives little account of the ensuing instruction, though he mentions the brutality with which he says the initiates are treated in the camp. Food is brought by the mothers and left nearby; the elders from the camp go to collect it. The boys are cut off from any comfort they might be given by their mothers. Instruction, "partly social, partly moral" (Schebesta, 1948, 481) may be given by the lineage head himself or by one of the other elders.

The major aspects of the *nkumbi*, from Schebesta's account, seem to be the formal transition from boyhood to manhood, the establishment of a *karí* relationship between Mbuti and villagers, and the introduction of all the initiates for the first time to a special trumpet that plays an important part in the men's secret

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177
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[P.179-D]

[ARCHERS]

P
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[P, 180-A]
society. Schebesta also mentions other instruments particularly associated with *nkumbi* (and the secret society) among the south Lese, namely: the bull-roarer (*pahudjuhudju* or *hudjuhudju*); a flute (*likuru*); a singing pot (*pengi*); and the large wooden trumpet (*asaragba*). The invitation to the Mbuti to take part in the *nkumbi* is one of the ways in which the villagers seek to maintain and extend their control over the Pygmies.
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[563]

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[578]
Schebesta concludes that we must distinguish two elements in the *nkumbi*: the villager element of initiation associated with circumcision and, quite distinct from it, the Pygmy element of initiation into the men's secret society (*tori*).

Marriage

P
521
584
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Schebesta (1948, 343) writes that it is difficult to determine which is the stronger, the interests of the hunting band or the interests and mutual affection of the two individuals concerned.

[ARCHERS]

584 62 [581] Marriage is certainly an economic factor of the greatest importance to the band, and the decision of the elders usually prevails. But according to Schebesta, if there is particularly ardent affection between an unmarried couple, they may be strong enough to resist group opinion even to the point of ignoring its just claims, in which case a compromise will be reached by the bands concerned. Although there may be preferences for marriage between certain bands, no marriage is arranged with disregard for individual inclinations. Each union is usually preceded by a period of flirtation and courtship.

613 62 832 The rule of exogamy bars any flirtation within a hunting band that consists of a single lineage. If the band consists of two lineages, there may be flirtation but controlled by the parents, the mother keeping an eye on her daughter, and the fathers or lineage heads watching over the boys. [836] Schebesta believes that in spite of such supervision there is, in fact, great premarital freedom, though always outside the bounds of exogamic prohibition. [684] [177] For the Efe, he records what appears to be a borrowed custom of making payments to the father of the girl, or to her mother, either for the privilege of having an affair with their daughter or as a penalty for being discovered.[1]

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[839] [838] [1] Masturbation (*ai afuni*), homosexuality (*ai bepe*), and adultery are known among the archers, but rarely. Lesbians (*dora bepe*) are unknown. Mbuti who practice such behavior are regarded by men with derision; women have a particular horror of homosexuals.

[P. 180-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 181- A]

583 the forest, pay a dog, five spears, and five arrows. Schebesta also cites the third possibility: a youth lives with his wife's band for some years, "pays" for his wife by his service to that band, then returns with her to his own band. If the payment or service proves to be insufficient, the girl's lineage claims the children, which otherwise belong to the father's band. Marriage by capture is unknown, and there are no indications that this practice ever existed.

583 585 [177] Nuptial ceremony is lacking among most Mbuti, but Schebesta says that in imitation of the Lese the southern archers practice a form of double ceremony in which the two bands formally meet and exchange their daughters. Normally, however, the archers seem to have, if anything, little ceremony. A youth, having secured the agreement of his betrothed, takes her back to his camp, with or without the permission of her band. There she lives with his mother, who teaches her the customs of the camp. Shortly afterward members of her band arrive. They demand their side of the bargain, either a bride in exchange or a gift of arrows,

[ARCHERS]

[P. 181-C]

gions most exposed to village influence. Objec- 595
tions to polygyny are based on economic rather
than moral grounds. A further obstacle to po- [177]
lygyny is one-way marriage of Mbuti girls to
villagers, a practice that Schebesta considers [582]
occurs with sufficient frequency to account for
the gradual replacement of marriage by ex-
change by marriage by service or payment.

Polyandry is unknown.

The sororate, writes Schebesta (1948, 384), is 587
usual in the wide sense of the word, and is prac-
ticed when the wife has had no children. When a 587
man dies, his widow is not obliged to remain in 589
his band or to remarry; she may choose for
herself. But if she is childless, then her own
band is obliged to make some compensation and
this may influence her decision. Normally, a
widow with children remains with them in her
late husband's band.

Relations between husband and wife and 593
their children are mentioned above (p. 177). It
may be added here that Schebesta notes that,
for the few days following the marriage, the
young man is freed of any obligation to hunt
and may devote his time to his bride.

[ARCHERS]

WIDOWHOOD

589 In any hunting band one may find divorced men and women between two states of marriage, and also widows and widowers who have had no chance to remarry. Widows, as mentioned, may remain in their late husbands' bands with their children or return to their own band. Aged widowers, no longer able to provide for a woman by hunting, remain single, as do the infirm, and both are provided for by their relatives.

589 177 Mbuti girls who have married villagers return sooner or later to their parental band; almost certainly when they are no longer fertile and cease to be of interest to their villager husbands. [587] If still young they may take a Pygmy husband; if too old to remarry, they live the life of a widow. These "widows" do their own cooking and receive frequent visits in the forest from their children who otherwise remain in the village. Sometimes one or another of the children will remain with her in the forest.[1]

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[1] Such a practice is contrary to what I was told among all Mbuti groups, namely, that such children are never accepted in the forest as Mbuti and may make only short visits, like other villagers.

[P 182-8]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 Mbuti
Mombu FO31
Lese

[ARCHERS]

The southern archers affirm that they always used to burn their corpses. Nowadays the burial takes place beside the hut of the deceased, and the corpse, covered with a cloth, is passed out through an opening made in the side of the hut. It is placed in a hole in the ground, covered with bark and earth. The hut is then pulled down over the tomb, and household utensils are added to the pile. Mourning is profound and sincere among men and women, but ritual dances of mourning, such as those practiced by villager women, are unknown.[9] P 764 P [765] [535] [114]

In "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri" Schebesta (1948, 543) gives details of a funeral he attended in a southern Lese village, and of an archer funeral, and compares the two. The archer funeral was of an old Mbuti who died after a short attack of smallpox. Schebesta received the news at six o'clock the morning following the death. On reaching the camp he found the corpse laid out in a new cloth, inside the hut. Nearby crouched the widow and eldest daughter. All the womenfolk of the camp were gathered outside the hut, crying and moaning. The eldest son had gone to the village to inform his father's *kari* (p. 179), and within two hours returned with three villagers, wailing. Meanwhile the Pygmies had agreed that the grave should be dug beside the hut. The most promi- P M 764 177 P M [608]

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[9] This statement, again, is totally contrary to my experience among both archers and net hunters.

[P. 182-D]

183 (A)

[ARCHERS]

[P-183-A]

P M 764 177 nent among the many archers who had hastened to attend the funeral took charge. He measured the corpse with his stick and drew the outline of the grave on the ground. His son, assisted by others, opened a grave, using pointed sticks, a hatchet, and a bush knife, and cleared the loosened earth with their hands. P [152] The crying of the women became louder, calling "*Afae!*" (father). A few women sat nearby, singing dirges. Not only the relatives mourned, but all present. P M [308] With the help of the Lese *kari*, the floor of the grave was covered with sticks, then leaves. The womenfolk hurried to the edge of the grave as the corpse, decorated only with an arm ring, was brought through a hole in the side of the hut and placed in the grave. P [152] The wailing reached its climax; the wife, children, and even the eldest grown son, threw themselves on the ground as the men began to fill in the grave. One man had to hold the eldest daughter to prevent her from throwing herself into the grave. The earth was stamped down, and the mourners moved away, women and children and some of the young men crying. One daughter remained near the grave as the house was pulled down to cover it (after the household goods had been removed).

Shortly after the burial some men went off hunting. By three o'clock the entire camp was deserted, and a new one had been built by evening.

[ARCHERS]

P Schebesta (1948, 545) cites this burial as evi-
M dence of band and lineal solidarity (e.g., the
764 prominent part played by neighboring bands in
•177 the funeral), and of the importance of the *karí*
171 relationship. Significant differences between
P the Mbuti and the Lese ceremonies were the
[821 absence, in the archer funeral, of the sacrifice of
628 a hen over the grave, the absence of the official
613] mourners in their clothes and white paint, of a
P M goat offering, and above all of the absence of a
[782] long palaver, following the burial, to place the
blame for the death. The question of blame did
[761] arise after the Mbuti burial described, but it
was the Lese who were primarily interested.
Nor, according to Schebesta, does a death have
such far-reaching social consequences among
the archers as among their villager neighbors.

Z SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

P The relationship between the Efe archers and
177 their villager neighbors is mentioned above.
439 The two peoples are associated in a hereditary
608 system, based on trade, strengthened by the

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P. 183-C]

kari relationship, and the practice of joint initiation and circumcision.

Z P 177 439

Among themselves the archers also practice a form of blood brotherhood, but the two major bonds are membership in the same economic local band and membership (with much wider extension) in the same secret society which the archers call *tori*. Schebesta (1948, 290) points out that a sense of tribal identity is totally lacking, that "clans" are dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance, and that even lineages, which in effect are the local hunting bands, are usually most properly viewed as economic entities. He gives neither genealogies nor any indication of any complex system of kinship terminology, nor any other evidence that kinship ties might be of extensive importance. There is even little evidence to support his allegation that the hunting band is a lineal entity. It appears throughout that the major unifying factor is one of common residence.

608 P 621 602 [608] [575] [61]

P 621 602 114

P [591]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

P Z 575 562 The society plays a part in social life by chastizing rebels, particularly women (Schebesta, 1948). All whom Schebesta (1937) questioned assured him that the primary object of the society was to keep the women in their place, mainly by stealing food from them for the society to feast upon. It is perhaps also

P Z [178] worth mentioning that Schebesta (1937, 101) writes: "Nowadays in the main a *toré* meeting place is just a home for hen-pecked husbands. . . . It has no connection in any way with the ceremonial of tribal initiation."

P Z 575 881 177 114 He modified these views in his later work (Schebesta, 1948, 492 *ff.*) but used the same evidence. He finds a definite connection between the *toré* society and the *nkumbi* "circumcision initiation." The latter, he says, is founded on the same belief in *toré* but has taken a villager form. Circumcision above all is a villager custom and has nothing to do with Mbuti initiation. Originally, the Mbuti knew only the association of *toré*, which integrated the young men into the adult group of *toré* hunters.

P Z 575 182 [562] As far as can be seen from this material, the *toré* society has both social and magico-religious functions. Its primary social function is the control of the womenfolk of any one Mbuti band (who, it will be remembered, come from varied bands and do not have the same communal feeling as the menfolk).

P 575 Schebesta mentions the fact that, when a meeting of the Mbuti *toré*

[P. 184-B]

[ARCHERS]

POLITICAL LIFE

AUTHORITY

622
114

None of the foregoing material is much concerned with leadership, and, indeed, it has been scarcely necessary to mention it. Some of the early sources, such as Casati (1891), Burrows (1898), Geil (1905), and Lang (1919) assert the existence of hereditary chieftainship; others (Johnston, 1902, 1904; Christy, 1924) deny this just as emphatically. Stuhlmann (1894), referring to bands of Mbuti living near the Manyema, states that the leader of each band is the ablest hunter and that he controls the wanderings of his band. Whether or not he has any other jurisdiction is not known.

Schebesta flatly denies the existence of hereditary chieftainship anywhere among the Mbuti, except among those most acculturated. He also denies the existence of charismatic 622 [177]

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[1] Antelope cries are imitated in this way.

[P 184-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1961-1965) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

Costermans further agrees with Junker P
(1889–1891, vol. 3, 92) that many of the 623
northern archers have recently themselves 184
taken to a system of chieftainship. They lead 178
their nomadic existence under the jurisdiction 621
of a chief and in every way preserve their
freedom under this jurisdiction. If there is any
disagreement, however, they leave and place
themselves under a neighboring chief. But not
nearly enough information is given for any
understanding of the structure of this "system."

Schebesta seems to stand between the two P 2
extremes with regard to the archers whom he 439
studied. He stresses the economic dependency 177 •
of the Mbuti on the villagers, and also, as does 571
Putnam (1948), the personal aspect of the rela- [114]
tionship. He does not agree with Costermans
that the archers change their allegiance at the
slightest provocation. He regards the *nkumbi*, P 2
with its creation of *kare* relationships between [881]
individual Mbuti and villagers, as a major [608]
factor in maintaining villager authority over
the archers and rendering the latter
dependent on their Lese neighbors.

[P. 185-D]

[ARCHERS] 000

without religion. From the descriptions given 776
by the few writers who mention the existence of 346
"spirit houses" and "temples," it may well be 171
that these in fact belonged to villagers. The 114
style of construction described by Geil (1905),
for instance, is certainly Bantu. None of these
sources offers any acceptable evidence that the
Mbuti used these spirit houses and temples.

Schebesta, from the outset of his first visit to 771
the Ituri, was convinced that the Mbuti had a
religious system. He finally concluded that it 776
comprised the notion of a dynamic but personal
divinity, that it was essentially the same among
all Ituri Mbuti, but that it differed from the
religious concepts of the neighboring villagers
though it was influenced by them. Schebesta [778]
asserts that the belief in a personal God is based
on the notion of vital force. God possesses the
totality of this force and distributes part of it to
worldly beings. Thus God is regarded not as a
transcendent creator but rather as a person who
lived long ago. He is sometimes confused with
the first ancestor and may be represented by
the moon.

The confusing abundance of names and terms 776
used by the various Mbuti is partly due to the 778
different languages spoken by both Mbuti and 192
villagers, and partly to villager influence, but it 197
in no way denotes any fundamental difference in 177 •
this basic concept of a personal God
accompanied by the belief in a vital
force.

[P.188-D]

[ARCHERS]

ation with fatality. Schebesta attributes this to 776
a confusion of religion and magic, a confusion of 177
Mbuti notions of God the Father with villager
notions of the demon of the forest (for the vil-
lager, the forest is essentially evil). Costermans [114]
(1938) claims that Schebesta fails to take ac-
count of the essential difference between Toré
and Muri-muri which he himself noticed among
the central archers (above) but chose to ignore.

Schebesta believes that, though different 776
groups of archers give precedence to one name 821
or another, there is only one God of the Under- [184]
growth, and he is universally associated with
fire, lightning, storms, death, the rainbow
(which frequently brings death), dreams, as
well as with the good life of the hunter. The [825]
chameleon is the sacred animal of the archers,
in rapport with the sky and the moon, the
storm and lightning.

There is also a belief in *befe*, forest sprites, 776
whose lord and master is Mbali or Kalisia. (The [171]
Lese and Mvuba use the term *lodi* for similar
sprites, says Schebesta.) They are also called
toré mo-ichu. They make their presence known
by two sorts of sound: one lugubrious, portend-
ing death, the other auguring good.

Cult Practices

776

A number of practices are associated with the 782

[P. 189-D]

[ARCHERS]

All Mbuti are said by Schebesta to offer a
782 portion of food to the God of the Undergrowth.
We can take this to apply to the archers. The practice seems to concern only food that has been hunted or gathered—game, honey, and vegetable products. The offering, never made with great fervor, may simply be thrown into the undergrowth, either in silence or with a brief comment such as "*Mugu! dab a iye!*" ("*Mugu!* This is for you!"). Alternatively, it may be placed on a leaf and taken with care into the forest and put in the fork of a tree, with or without an invocation. Stakes may be used, driven into the ground, forked into three or
[415] more branches at the upper end. Clay pots (obtained from villagers) or potsherds are
[777] placed in these forks for the offerings. Holes in
the sides of trees are also used as a depository for offerings. The Mbuti do not usually use special shrines or spirit huts, affirms Schebesta, though in imitation of the villager ancestor shrines, they sometimes build crude shelters for the God of the Undergrowth and, on occasion, place offerings there.

According to one of Schebesta's archer in-
[224] formants, sacrifice following the hunt is not to
[769] Toré but to the *lodi* (the dead) who then inter-
[776] cede with Toré.

Another important sacrifice is made for the
782 re-opening of the forest (*abo lese or sulia*). Con-
776 tinuously bad hunting may be attributed to the
224 anger of the God of the Undergrowth, caused by

[P. 190-B]

[ARCHERS]

shout of joy. The wife of the elder then took 776
the carcass and invoked Bali and the ancestors, 224
asking them to give their children game again.
The dead chicken was then given to a woman 782
married into another band who, together with her children, ate it. This woman's son, a nephew of the band concerned, built a small hut (*sa'a*) near the elder's hut, and placed in it the heart and liver of the chicken; the head was stuck on a stake above. The elder made an invocation for game to both Bali and the *befe* (sprites).

Schebesta came across this ceremony twice, 782
once at Rodjo and once at Maseda, identical 184
each time except for minor differences. Certain 177•
details, he claims, are borrowed from the villagers, such as the use of a chicken, which the [235]
Mbuti do not raise. He thinks that the sprinkling of blood is also foreign but that nonetheless there evidently was once an indigenous ceremony for opening the forest, involving the offering of the heart and entrails of game.

This practice of invocation and sacrifice to the 782
"*Buschgott*" is held by Schebesta (1950, 209) to 776
be the most significant feature of Mbuti reli- 171
gion, distinguishing it clearly from the religion of the villagers who have no cult to the forest God.

Costermans (1938), however, believes that 776
the word "Toré" cannot be associated with 192
"God," that the *toré* association has no religious 114

[P.190-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.191-A]

776 function, any more than has the whole ritual of
192 initiation. *Toré*, according to Costermans, is, if
114 anything, a spirit cult. The *toré* are spirits of the
dead, known under different names such as *toré bo ichu*, *toré bo iko*, *toré ba iza*, and are clearly differentiated from the godhead. Sacrifice to Toré may take two forms, writes Costermans, *toré lusi* and *toré luba* (*lusi*, invoke; *luba*, throw, offer), and is practiced more by Lese villagers than by the archers, who practice it only rarely, for the hunt. Costermans, far from denying that the Mbuti possess a notion of God, affirms that they do, as do the villagers, but insists that it is dissociated from the *toré* cult described by Schebesta.

Death and Afterlife

761 The Pygmy notion of soul appears complex
774 and confused to Schebesta (1950, 90; 1952,
171 332). He attributes the confusion to heavy
borrowing from the villagers, the Mbuti origi-
[177] nally having little interest in life after death. There is a distinction between body, shade, and soul, respectively, *ela* (or *eda*), *tedi*, and *boru e'i* (or *borupi* in Efe). The Lese villagers make the same distinction. Breath, *ekeu*, is a vital force, extinguished at death. The Mbuti believe that
[775] shades become *befe*, or forest sprites, and the
[776] villagers claim that they become *lodi* or *keti*, phantoms.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

775 The soul, the word for which designates the
761 pulse, appears to return to God (Toré) in the
sky, where it becomes a star. The other vital
[774] force mentioned, *megbe*, changes into the
totem after death. Death is inevitable, the will
of God calling back the *boru e'i*.

774 Dreams are events that actually befall the
828 soul during sleep, according to the archers.
While the body sleeps, the *boru e'i* leave it and
wander at will. In this way God and the dead
can manifest themselves during sleep.

775 The northern archers think of a realm for the
souls of the dead, situated in ravines and caves,
[777] and of a lord of this realm of the dead. Both the
dead and their god are, like the God of the
Undergrowth, termed "Toré"; but Schebesta
attributes this to a confusion of properly
Pygmy notions (the cult of *toré* as described by
him) and adopted villager notions (i.e., the cult
[769] of the dead). Schebesta holds that the true
Mbuti have no cult of the dead. On death one
of the vital principles takes the form of a star,
living with the celestial divinity, remote from
the Mbuti world.

[P. 191-B]

[NET HUNTERS] The relation of the huts to one another in the 361 circle is dictated, as much as anything, by the 621 friendship of the women. (Their gathering [571] activities do not demand cooperation, but Putnam says that they help one another for company, forming work groups of two or more adult women.)

There are frequent visitors to these camps, 574 439 including villagers who come to claim, trade, or buy meat from the Pygmies. If a villager chief comes, a special hut is built for him.

FURNITURE

352

The furnishings of a hut are similar to those [184] described by Schebesta, and, like the archers, these net hunters keep their possessions to the minimum (Figs. 18–20). Leaves are used as furniture more frequently than either beds or stick chairs. The Pygmy will not sit on bare [516] ground, and if a log is not available he will use a piece of bark or a leaf.

UTENSILS

412

Also as with the archers, utensils are largely 439 borrowed or stolen from the villagers who make [177] them (Fig. 21). The net hunters do not imitate their neighbors, however, to the extent of making mortars for themselves. If they possess mortars, they are extremely small, unlike the large ones described by Schebesta, which could not easily be carried from camp to camp by a

[P. 195-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 197-A]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

B
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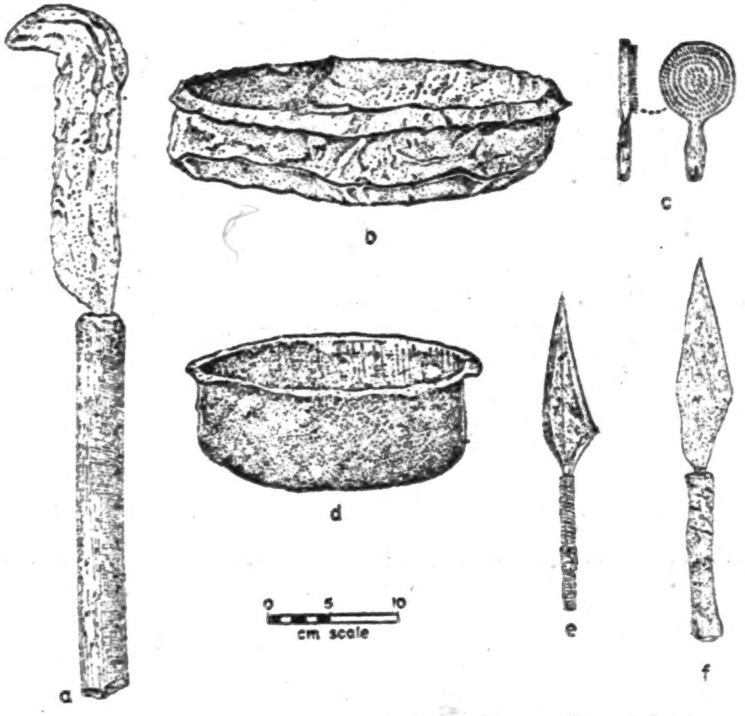
412
415



P
[177]
[439]

FIG. 21. Household utensils of metal, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Machete, used for cutting large saplings such as those required for village houses. b. Cooking vessel (trade), needed for the cooking of village foods, such as rice, requiring boiling. c. Comb. Another villager use of metal that finds favor among the Mbuti. d. Cooking vessel. e. Knife. f. Knife, used mainly, and widely, by Mbuti women for food preparation and for the preparation of roofing leaves. These are the common household utensils of metal that might be found in any net-hunting camp.

[P.196-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200-A]

287 red dye. For painting designs on barkcloth,
386 either a finger or a twig may be used. The de-
531 signs vary considerably, and one piece of bark-
cloth may have three of four distinct patterns.
● [177] This is possibly in imitation of the local villager
practice of sewing strips of barkcloth together
to obtain larger pieces, resulting in the juxtaposition of different designs.

291 The making of belts (Fig. 28) from plaited
283 fiber and the twisting of lengths of shredded
824

291
285

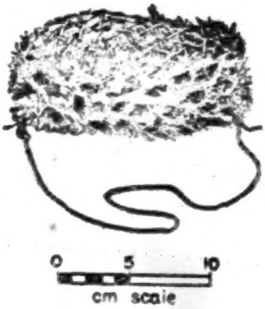


FIG. 29. Basketry hat, *ngala*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made at whim by young or old, men or women, and worn without regard to status.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200 - B]

nkusa vine into cord, mainly used for net re- 291
pairing, are also everyday occupations. The 283
net hunters use vine much more widely than 824
the archers who use it for basketry rather than [285]
cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of cer- [84]
tain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a 824
long vine used for making children's swings and [312]
the high swings used by young men mainly dur- [524]
ing the honey season.

Body Decoration

Body decoration and mutilation as described 302 [304]
in the Putnam material is similar to that re-
counted by Schebesta, except that in the paint- [386]
ing of designs on the body Anne Putnam men-
tions the use of ***kangay***, a black dye obtained
from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a).
This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and [822]
white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A va- 291
riety of hats and headdresses is used by the net 301
hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and
lip plugs. All of these may be made by the [177]
Mbuti, though often in imitation of village ar-
tifacts (Fig. 30).

[NET HUNTERS]

P
386
301
B
301

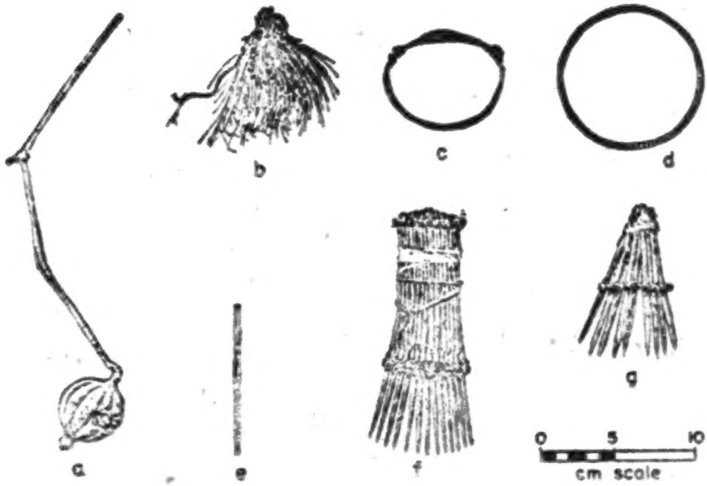


FIG. 30. Personal adornment. a. *Kangay* (gardenia) seed, used by women for extraction of a black dye for painting the body, also for painting designs on barkcloth; net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. b. Hair decoration, *mongele* antelope hair; net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. c–d. Bracelets; Bira villagers, Central Ituri. e. Nose and/or lip plug, *bobu;* net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. f. Comb, *kisanoa;* Bira villagers, Central Ituri. g. Comb, *kisanoa;* net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. As everywhere among the Mbuti, metal objects are of villager origin. Many of the wooden objects of personal adornment are made in imitation of villager artifacts (compare f and g).

p
[177]

[P. 200-C]

[NET. HUNTERS]

en. The making of barkcloth and netting, and the painting of designs on cloth and body, are individual skills which are utilized for the craftsman himself or for his immediate family. Women living in adjoining huts sometimes exchange their skills in body painting, exercising their art on one another. 462 [476] [571]

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting

Like Schebesta, Putnam stresses hunting and gathering as the basis of Mbuti economy. Putnam (1948, 327) also states that hunting is the principal means by which the Pygmy-villager relationship is maintained. Although there is little division of labor among the Mbuti themselves, he (1948, 328) says in a sense that they are all specialists in hunting, so there is a division of labor between Pygmy and village groups, the two together forming a larger economic entity. The villager may do some hunting, but largely by means of traps, deadfalls, and pits. It occupies little of his time and is not very productive. For the Pygmy, hunting is a full-time occupation. 224 433 439 177 [222] [463] [171]

[P. 201-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

262 Lesser taboos are observed by children until they reach the age of puberty. These, according to the Pygmies themselves, result from the fact that a certain kind of food makes a certain child sick and thenceforth is taboo to it.

262 There are also certain food restrictions during periods of puberty, pregnancy, and mourning, and others emphasizing the opposition of the
[825] sexes. Putnam gives as an example the refusal of men to eat frogs and toads, which women gladly eat, and suggests as a reason the association of the amphibians with water and land, and that they might bring about rainfall adverse to hunting.

TRADE

439
• 177
[184] As with the archers, great stress is laid by Putnam on the present dependency of the net hunters on the villager plantations for vegetable food, particularly the plantain. In principle the system is the same as that outlined by Schebesta. Putnam says that the relationship is interfamilial and inherited according to the principle of patrilineal descent. There is no strict account kept of trade, or any system of equivalent values
[571] other than mutual satisfaction. But the villager, if displeased, may withhold bananas, and the Pygmy, if not satisfied, may leave and go to hunt with another band attached to another patron. (Putnam uses the term "host.") When

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[177] [1] Very possibly of village origin.

[P. 211-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.211-C]

alliances change in this way it is a source of fric- 439
tion between the two village groups involved 177
and was at one time a frequent source of inter-
village warfare.

Prior to this trade relationship, however, 648
Putnam stresses the importance of the place of 439
the Pygmies as mercenaries, acting as spies and 177
scouts for warring village tribes. From his in- [174]
quiries during his first period of field-work in
1928 he surmised that throughout the Ituri this
had at one time been the major basis of the
Mbuti-villager relationship. It necessitated the
supply of food by the villager to the Pygmy, as
the latter had no time to hunt and gather his
own food. When the Belgians put an end to tri- [178]
bal warfare, there was no further need for the
Mbuti as mercenaries, resulting in the present
trade relationship. The difference between net- 648
hunting Pygmies and those of Schebesta's ac- 184
count, in their relationship with the villagers, is 177
that among the archers the relationship is band 571
to village, a result of the Belgian bolstering of
chieftainship, even where it did not exist, for
administrative convenience. The village "chief"
then chooses to work through a Pygmy "chief"

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

of his own creation. But among the Epulu net hunters, and other central and western groups, in which village tribal structure has not been so greatly affected, the relationship is still, in Putnam's opinion, intensely personal between individual and individual, or family and family. The superficial dissatisfaction manifest between Pygmy and villager over their trade relationship is a result of and symbolizes the present stratification with the villager at the upper end of the scale and hides the inner feelings of loyalty and affection that Putnam says exists between the two groups. 648 184 177 571 [439]

SOCIAL LIFE

Family Organization

621 562

For the most part the family organization among the net hunters is the same as that described by Schebesta for the archers, and, as with them, some of the women come from different bands and are strangers to one another. The net hunting camps are larger, however, than those of the archers, and it is seldom that a bride finds herself a total stranger in her new home. Further, because of the differences in hunting technique, cooperative feeling among the women of a net-hunting band is much stronger than that [582] [184] 621 476 184 562

[p. 211-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

533 four types of song can be distinguished by its musical form alone, but its performance is not necessarily limited to the appropriate occasion. Thus a *molimo* song may be sung around the campfire in the evening without the *molimo* association's necessarily holding a formal meeting, which would exclude the presence of women. Similarly, honey-gathering songs may be sung well out of honey season. A fifth group, play songs, is associated with children's games and mothers' lullabies.

512 Singing, dancing, and story telling may continue late into the night unless it is raining. Families retire to their huts as they feel inclined, but throughout the night there is nearly always a small group of men or boys around the main fire, warming themselves or smoking. This is where the bachelors generally sleep.

84 CONCEPTION AND CHILDBIRTH

184 The general information given by Schebesta for the archers applies to the net hunters also. 845 Putnam has, however, recorded a number of difficult births, and Mrs. Putnam witnessed various measures taken to overcome complications. On one occasion a Pygmy woman was in labor for 36 hours in a village. Villager and [199] Pygmy women came and tried their own individual remedies, including filling the ears and

[P. 213-8]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 213-C]

nose with leaves (Pygmy), making slight cuts 845 on the stomach, arms, and knees and rubbing [177] in herbal medicines (villager), and rubbing the stomach with cold water (both Pygmy and villager). While these activities were going on, children were playing about and running in and out of the hut where the pregnant woman was kept. Finally, the woman in labor, who, though in great pain, had never uttered a word of complaint was made to sit on a log, while one woman sat behind her and held her up, and another in front massaged the infant out. During the whole period of labor the woman's father and her husband were with her constantly. It [843] was agreed that her difficulties resulted from her having broken a food taboo and eaten the flesh of an anteater.[1]

Another aid used by the Pygmy woman during 844 childbirth is described by Anne Putnam (1954, 165). The girl in labor is given one end of a liana to hold; the other end is tied to a tree. Each time the pains start, the girl pulls on the liana as her friends massage her stomach.

[NET HUNTERS]

If no foster mother is available, an infant whose mother dies during childbirth is fed banana water, supplied by the villagers, through a leaf funnel. When an infant is in such danger, the juice from a certain liana is sprinkled over it to make it strong. 846 [853]

A woman who has given birth is not allowed to leave her hut until game has fallen into her husband's net. If the camp is moved before this happens, she is hidden in the bush and taken separately to the new camp where she is kept hidden until her new hut is built for her by relatives (not stated which relatives). The husband himself may not join the hunt but sends his net with another member of the group.

The father keeps the arrow that cut the umbilical cord, and the cord itself, until the child is old enough to throw them both away into the forest.

If no animal falls into the husband's net (the rule is extended usually to include some close relative's net) for some weeks, the mother and infant may be brought out of seclusion by the giving of a feast to her relatives. The baby is then shaved with an arrowpoint, bathed, rubbed with oil and red *nkula* paste, and bands [851]

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[1] Note that this took place in a village, where such supernatural explanations are always sought by villagers. It is doubtful that the same explanation would have been given in the forest context. [777] [771] •

[P 213-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.214-A]

846 [851] of barkcloth are sewed around its arms and knees. The father and mother are now freed of most restrictions, but neither may eat meat until the baby can crawl. The exact extent of restrictions on sexual relations[1] during this period is not given by Putnam.

844 Putnam emphasizes the normality of childbirth itself, despite the possibility of ensuing complications such as those described above from Anne Putnam's personal observation. The woman makes no allowance for her condition and may actually be moving from one camp to another when her time comes, in which case she gives birth to the child and then moves on (Putnam, 1948, 339). There is no ritual recogni-
851 tion of the birth of a child. Naming takes place
553 only after some weeks when the infant has shown that it "has come to stay." If it dies
[766] before it has been named, there is no particular ceremony and little mourning except by the mother. There is a great deal of fostering and
597 adoption, according to Putnam (1948, 340),
85 particularly between sisters and women who are friends and who work together. When a woman with young children dies, her sister takes her girls and young boys and looks after the girls until they are marriageable; the father

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[177] [1] Again it must be stressed that many such restrictions are part of the village system, and, although the Mbuti may claim to follow them, such adherence is likely to be far from rigid.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 217- C]

comparison with the *nkumbi* as described by Schebesta for the archers. P 881

In the Epulu region the *nkumbi* takes place every three years. It is organized and conducted throughout by the villagers, who invite the Mbuti to take part. The first part of the year, from the dry season onward, is considered most suitable. On this particular occasion there were no village boys of the right age, but the villagers (Bira and Ndaka) went ahead with the arrangements as usual. The fact that only Pygmy boys were to be initiated made no difference to the celebrations, which were conducted in the village with full enthusiasm, bringing villagers from as far as 50 miles away. Villagers allowed themselves to be beaten with long sapling whips (Fig. 46) "to give strength" to the Mbuti candidates. P 177 • 881 Z 563 881 P Z [411] [751]

After a week of preliminary festivities, on the day of the first circumcision, the *makata* sticks (a set of eight or nine resonant sticks tuned to a specific scale) were cut and sounded. The *makata* are heard only during a period of initiation and are destroyed simultaneously with the initiation camp at the end of the festival. Villagers and Pygmies joined in a dance with the *makata*, while others went into the forest a short distance to make a clearing for the initiation camp. P Z 534 881 177 P Z [535]

[NET HUNTERS]

ation camp. While some started erecting the hut, in the style of a bent-over windshield, others prepared a horizontal cross bar between two trees. Five boys were circumcised the first day, and three on separate days during the second week of the *nkumbi*. Not all were cut on the cross bar. Some were taken down to a stream. One was circumcised in the middle of the village; another, in a different place within the initiation camp. The cutting was done to the accompaniment of much drumming, while all the womenfolk of the village were shut up in their huts. No signal was given to indicate when a boy had been cut, though probably the change in the vigor of the drumming and *makata* beating served to notify the women. Only one boy was given a *segbe* pipe to blow, by a particularly superstitious father. The "doctor" wore a mask made of a thin strip of bark (Fig. 48a) and raffia armbands (Fig. 47a) which were thereafter left hanging from the roof of the initiation hut.

P
Z
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[346]

Z
P
[759]
[301]

After the circumcision, the wounds were dressed, and the boys immediately were made to begin to learn the initiation songs. Far from

P
Z
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177

[P 217- D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 218-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.218-A]

B
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881
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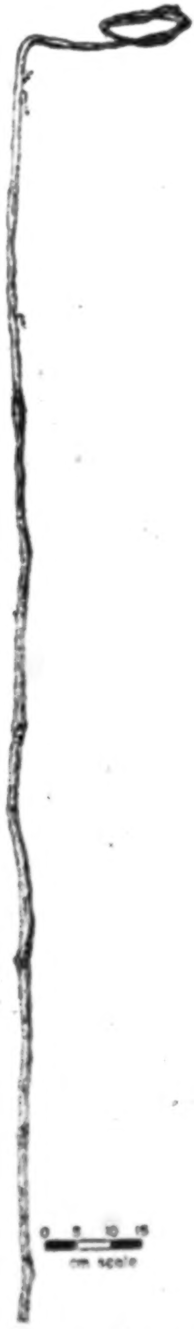


FIG. 46. Initiation whip, *mbeke*, Bira villagers, Central Ituri.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 218-B]

being confined to their beds for three days, as P
mentioned by Schebesta (1952), they were Z 881
made to move about continually by the villager 177 •
instructors. The boys' fathers, who were present
at all times, frequently comforted their sons,
apparently to the annoyance of the villagers.
There was, however, no question of the sav-
agery implied by Schebesta. During the follow- P
ing two months the boys were strictly disci- Z
plined. There was a process of physical training 881
that was undeniably tough, but it fulfilled only 861
one of the major purposes of the *nkümbi*, 177
namely, to fit boys for adult life. The Mbuti P
fathers, however, obviously had different ideas Z
as to how far this discipline should be carried (571)
and criticized the villagers when they carried
it too far. Further, when there were no vil- P
lagers in the camp, the Mbuti talked quite 881
openly and showed by their speech and their 829
behavior that they had no respect for the ta- 177
boos associated with the festival. It seemed Z
quite evident that they consciously underwent 881
the *nkumbi*, not because of any religious sig- 177
nificance, but because it gave them status in
villager society, in which any uncircumcised
youth is a laughing stock. The important thing,
then, was the circumcision, for this specific
purpose.

[NET HUNTERS]

881 mony the boys returned to their hunting band
and resumed their previous status.

885 Among the net hunters the Mbuti boys do
not participate fully in the proceedings of the
[575] *molimo* society until they have proved their
prowess as hunters. Putnam does not mention
any such elaborate ceremony as that described
by Schebesta for the archers, to mark the killing
of his first game by a youth, but such an
event is simply received among the net hunters
with much acclaim and, if possible, feasting and
[304] dancing. It may also be accompanied by the
cutting of the tattoo marks on the boy's forehead.

881 It seems that with the net hunters the ***nkumbi***
177 serves merely to give status in villager society.
17 The Mbuti have different forms of initiation
into the religious associations of their own men
[554] and women; the ***molimo*** and ***elima***, respectively.
They are, at least, forms of initiation practiced

[P. 219 - B]

[NET HUNTERS]

apart from the villagers, whatever the origin of 881
the actual ceremonies. 177
171

Marriage

Putnam is able to cite several cases of con- 58
flict over marriage, proposed or accomplished, [578]
and while such conflict may secondarily be [621]
between two lineages, it is primarily between [613]
the hunting band (whether it composes a single lineage or more than one) and the individual concerned. Putnam mentions neither arranged marriages nor the betrothal of infants, although there may be bands with whom marriage is preferred. The net-hunting Mbuti themselves simply say "the further away the better," referring to geographical distance. Kinship dis- [613]
tance means little to them, though all cite general rules of bilateral lineage exogamy.

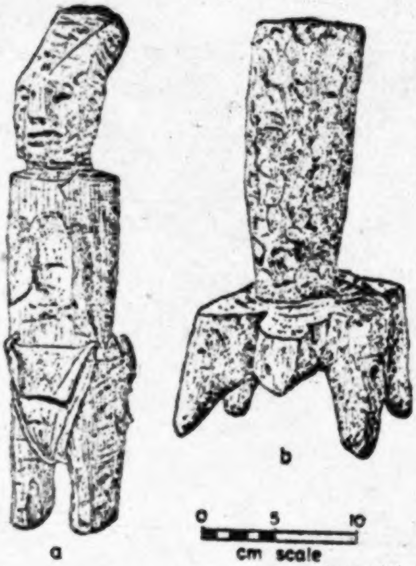
Putnam says that the hunting band is 58
meant to be an exogamous unit, but that in 621

[P. 219-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

532



[MM] FIG. 49. Wood carvings, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Carving of standing male. b. Carving of tree. Such carving is done by the Mbuti extremely rarely and only in direct imitation of the villager carvers.

[P. 220-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

P
Living as he does in the present, the most 621
important consideration for the Mbuti is the 571
present constitution of the band. Absent [613]
members of the band, regardless of lineage, are
soon forgotten as economic members, though
lineal ties will be remembered for as long as any
Mbuti remembers such ties (not more than
three generations). Consequently, the question
of economic allegiance among the net hunters
does not arise even for the first generation P
resident aliens, let alone for their offspring. [594]
Any considerations that do arise are invariably
connected with the relationship between the P
individual family and its villager host. When an 571
Mbuti changes his residence, he automatically 177
changes his allegiance to the local villagers who 166
act as patrons of his new band. The villager, on Z
the other hand, does not so easily adjust himself 563
to losing a Pygmy. He tries by threats and 571
bribery to get the Pygmy back to his own district 177
but, failing that, will take action against
the newly adopted villager patron.

It is plain that the band as an economic P
unit is the effective unit for net-hunting Mbuti, 621
and that its welfare, together with individual 581
inclination, should be the prime concern when a 582
question of marriage arises. When the marriage is within the band and there is no immediate change in its economic constitution, there is no concern, providing the general niceties of

[P.220-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-A]

621 exogamy have been observed. When it is
581 between two bands, then the Mbuti prefer
582 them to be as far apart as possible. The trouble
628 they envisage in a marriage with a member of a
58 nearby band is friction between themselves and
571 the village patron of the incoming bride. He
177 will constantly assert every claim he has, or
thinks he has, to her services, even to her
children when she revisits her own band. As
628 far as the two Mbuti bands are concerned, such
583 a marriage would be on an exchange basis, thus
maintaining the economic balance of each band.
[584] If the groom's band cannot find a suitable
girl to offer, his mother's band may be asked to
find one. There is always the alternative of
compensation or service, or both. For compensation
the help of the village patron is usually
sought, and the marriage is arranged by him.
[585] Such marriages are usually subject, in the
first place, to the normal Mbuti custom, which
involves no ceremony other than a mutually
agreeable exchange and a token offering of
gifts, such as a few arrows.

[NET HUNTERS]

Z gifts, such as a few arrows. But it is also sub-
585 ject to settlement between the two villagers
628 involved. This is formally accomplished by
563 having a ceremony in the village according to
P village custom. [Both Putnam (MS) and
177 Schebesta (1952, 238) mention the possibility
585 of a double ceremony when it is a question of
exchanging two brides rather than of effecting a
"purchase."] Such ceremonies, belonging to the
villager rather than the Mbuti, need not con-
cern us here. It is worth noting, however, that,
as with the village ceremony of *nkumbi* initi-
ation, the Mbuti undergo the village marriage
P ceremony merely as a matter of convenience.
[829] They pay no attention to its magical or
religious significance, or to the taboos that would
fall upon any villagers undergoing the same
ceremony (though they may pay lip service to
P them in the presence of their patron). Fur-
[533] ther, even during such a villager ceremony, the
Mbuti have their own way of consecrating the
[535] union, both by introducing a dance with forest
leaves, associated with the *elima* (the women's
religious association), and by the singing of
elima songs. In this way the young bride from
the distant band is introduced to the associ-
ation of her female companions-to-be.

P It is unlikely that the bride will be a com-
609 plete stranger to the band, but even if so, she
571 will be immediately befriended and will have
585 willing helpers to make her first few days of

[P. 221 - B]

[NET HUNTERS]

After marriage the affection between the young husband and his bride is no less open than before marriage. An estimation of any degree of affection necessarily depends on one's own attitude, but Schebesta's description of "passion" and "ardor" would hardly be applicable to the net-hunting Mbuti; "determination" would perhaps describe the situation better. Initial flirtations that lead to marriage openly change in character from relations on a purely sexual basis to a more intimate relationship of companionship, which is manifest by the way young grooms behave toward their brides and even older men to their wives. P 593

Divorce

Divorce is achieved as informally as marriage, whether the union dissolved involves just the one or two bands. It is usually initiated, says Putnam (1948, 337), by the woman's simply packing her household goods into her basket and leaving with her children. In such a case, the sons, when old enough, return to their father and the daughters remain with their mother until married. Such a divorce may well upset the complementary marriage if it is a marriage by exchange. Such a dispute almost certainly involves the village patrons, who may finally be called upon to settle it between themselves, the patron of the happily married Mbuti making a compensatory payment to the patron claiming the return of that Mbuti's bride. P 586

P Z [177] • [571] Z [563]

[P 221-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.222-C]

Far less important than disease or accidental death is animal hostility—elephants, buffalo, and leopards being the major sources of danger. It is extremely rare for any Pygmy to be killed by one of these animals. The net-hunting Mbuti have effective medicines against poisonous snakes. 165 136 [278]

For most illnesses, says Putnam, the Pygmy can find a local remedy. For stomach upsets and diarrhea an enema (a hollow reed with a gourd gummed to one end) is administered, with the use of vegetable decoctions containing *gorogoro* bark for the former complaint, and *tebvo* liana for the latter. These enemas are also used to produce abortions. For ailments that they are unable to cure and that are foreign to them, some may seek the help of a villager witch doctor, though Mbuti opinion varies as to their efficiency. 757 [847] [755] [177]

Death, then, is accepted as just as natural a phenomenon as birth, and the body is accorded little ritual respect. There are, unlike Schebesta's account for the archers, cited examples of wailing. The following instances taken from the notes of Anne Putnam illustrate its extent. 763 [761]

[NET HUNTERS]

764 miles away. There was some suggestion that the Mbuti should be buried in the village of his patron, but the eldest son refused and said that the forest was his father's "earth," and this was where he should be buried.

The grave was dug by Mbuti and villagers, about 4 feet deep, with half of it 1½ feet deeper. The body was placed in the deep section, on its side, facing north, covered with sticks and phrynium leaves. Then everyone threw in earth and filled the grave. The women at the funeral became hysterical at this point, falling to the ground and beating themselves. The dead man's second wife tried to throw herself into the grave on top of the body. When the grave was filled, everyone sat down and talked and smoked. The youngest son of the deceased had been playing around quite happily all the time. After smoking, villagers and Mbuti all washed their hands and feet in a nearby stream.

152 Both Patrick and Anne Putnam claim that there is, among the Epulu Mbuti, formal and controlled wailing, also wailing as a manifestation of genuine grief among both men and women. Men and women will weep apart during

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● [177] [1] Suggestions of this kind are sometimes made by the Mbuti in their village context, in imitation of the villagers. They by no means necessarily indicate Mbuti belief.

[P 223-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.223-C]

the official wailing, as well as before or after it. 152

Anne Putnam (1954, 77) mentions the opin- 764
ion of a Pygmy hunter concerning the village
custom of burying the dead in a cemetery. He 829
is reported as saying, "There the ground locks
everyone's arms together and it isn't comfortable."

She also refers (1954, 81) to village speech- 763
making following a burial, during which the 761
cause of the death is hinted at. On one occasion, [754]
the death of a young Pygmy girl in the village,
the villagers attributed the calamity to the evil-eye
and roused a relative of the girl to vow vengeance.
The next morning, however, the Pyg- 765
mies all went hunting, despite the assurance of 177
the villagers that it was dangerous to go hunt- 224
ing for three days after any death and that no
game would fall into their nets. Four antelope
were caught.

[NET HUNTERS]

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The relationship between the net-hunting P 177 •
band, or between individual members of it, and 571
village patrons is dealt with separately. It 881
has already been mentioned that Putnam Z
speaks of its current foundation in trade, and of 563
how the joint *nkumbi*, unlike that of the 571
archers, seems not to have the same significance 881
for villager and Mbuti. For the villager it is a P
tribal initiation in its usual sense and with its [554]
usual implications; for the Mbuti the *nkumbi* is
a means of acquiring status in an alien community.
It does not seem to initiate both into P
identical social or religious associations, such as Z [575]
the *toré* society described by Schebesta (1952,
278).

Also, there is no evidence of blood brotherhood P
or of a *karé* relationship between villagers 575
and net hunters. When we deal with religious 571
associations among the net hunters, we deal P
with exclusively Mbuti associations. This is not Z
to deny that a close relationship exists between [608]
an Mbuti and his villager patron, which, in Z
fact, Putnam stresses; nor does it deny the fact [575]
that Mbuti may be invited to take part in the [571]
meetings of villager associations, and that villagers
may conversely be invited to take part in
the meetings of Mbuti associations (though information
on joint meetings is lacking). All our
material deals with exclusive meetings of the
elima and *molimo*, as held by the Mbuti women
and men, respectively.

Information on the *elima* is scant; there is no P
evidence of any ritual other than the singing of 575

[P 223-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 224-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

173 [P.228-A]

534 animal and since then no woman has been al-
825 lowed to see it.

562 Local villagers, who claim also to have the
171 *molimo*, are critical of the occasional joking at-
• 177 titude of the Mbuti and say that they, the vil-
534 lagers, call it out only when someone important
has died.

POLITICAL LIFE

Authority

622 Putnam goes further than Schebesta with re-
888 gard to the existence or non-existence of chief-
tainship among the Mbuti. Primarily of the net
[623] hunters he writes, "... there are no chiefs,
councils, or any other formal governing bodies
in a pygmy camp" (Putnam, 1948, 334). There
is respect, he says, for age and experience (*not*
for "elders"); the opinions of the old and the
wise are generally heeded. Any individual who
shows disrespect for an old man, or who refuses
to comply with any reasonable request, is
abused by the others. Old men who are eccen-
trics are ignored.

[NET HUNTERS]

P
628 [P.229-A]
476 change of camp may thus reveal significant
361 tendencies not only in interpersonal relations
578 but also in the composition of the band itself.
621

Relationships Between Mbuti and Villagers

P Putnam had the advantage of being able to
177 observe the changes in composition of the Epulu
571 hunting band and its ties with neighboring vil-
Z lagers for more than two decades. As is stated
563 above, the relationship between the net hunters
571 and their villager neighbors is an individual and
strongly personal relationship, as described by
P Schebesta (p. 185). The effect is that of an in-
Z herited relationship, but inheritance is not the
[428] basis. The effect is maintained only by the closeness of the personal bonds of loyalty and affection. If these bonds are weakened through any cause, there is nothing to stop the Pygmy from changing his allegiance to another villager. It
Z may cause bad feeling between him and his pa-
[628] tron, but it primarily affects the relationship between the two villagers concerned.

[NET HUNTERS]

Z
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The villagers, says Putnam (1948, 324), regard the Mbuti as a class of beings somewhere between humans and animals. They take Pygmy wives, however, because they are prolific and good to sleep with, and the children of such unions are considered as full human beings and are brought up as such. Further, the villagers think of the Mbuti as barbaric and uncultured, but this attitude does not affect their mutual affection.

There is some evidence that respect for the Mbuti, in some form, is not lacking among the villagers. Geluwe (1956) mentions the Bira custom of offering first fruits from the plantations to the Pygmies. Anne Putnam says that the villagers agree with the Pygmies and that the latter have the right to take what food they want from the plantations following the killing of an elephant. Possoz (1954, 2575) suggests that there are linguistic grounds for assuming that the villagers originally referred to the Mbuti by a term denoting respect for them because of their closer connection with the forest spirits.

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Putnam mentions trade and the *nkumbi* as two of the major factors, apart from personal relations at an inter-familial level, in maintaining the Mbuti-villager relationship.

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Z
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177
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Another important factor in interaction is the dance. When the Mbuti stay near the vil-

[P 229-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.229-C] P
lage for any length of time, as when the villager Z
needs help in the cutting of new plantations, 535
then the Pygmy dance is a spectacle eagerly 177
awaited by the villagers. 571

Finally, Putnam mentions the fact that, P
when there is a case of poaching by one band 628
within the territory of another, instead of one 648
lineage head or "elder" consulting the other Z
(the process described by Schebesta for the 648
archers), the bands probably just inform the
villagers involved and leave it to them to
settle.

In disputes between villagers and Mbuti, P
there is no question of any one Mbuti repre- 648
senting his lineage or band; such of the more Z
important hunters as are available, and 648
usually a number of the younger men and even 563
older boys, come in a body to argue their case
together. The villager is always at a slight dis-
advantage. While the Mbuti can easily move
and find another village patron, it is not so
easy for a villager to find more Mbuti.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Anne Putnam reports that Pygmy groups pay social visits to villagers when they feel like having a rest from forest life. They stay for as long as their patron is prepared to feed them, or until they decide to return to the forest. She states that while a Pygmy certainly can break his relationship at any time, such is not often done. She also reports groups of archers and of net hunters that are very much under the control of their villager patrons and can defy them only with the greatest difficulty. The effective mechanism by which any individual villager maintains his authority over the Mbuti is not clear, as the benefits the Mbuti receives he can receive from any villager. P 177 571 574 Z 563 571

Legal System

There are no data available on property law, and there is no clear distinction between collective and private property, as far as can be learned from the material that is available. Most items of personal possession, except used barkcloth, change hands at some time or another, temporarily or permanently, with or without any immediate exchange. There is certainly no scale of values by which any item of property may be assessed in relation to another. The question of whether personal goods, such as cooking utensils for the women or weapons and hunting nets for the men, are P 421 P 422

[P 229-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

Mrs. Putnam mentions a villager chief who 759
called in a Pygmy "doctor" who made an 177
incision in the chief's knee from which he with- 171
drew antelope bones and some bugs. Putnam (1948, 340), as does Schebesta (1941, 236), mentions Pygmies' going to villager doctors for treatment of ailments for which the Pygmies have no remedy. This is the only instance quoted of the reverse process, and the only mention of any Pygmy specialist. No further details are known as to how and where the Pygmy acquired his art and reputation.

The villagers recognize the Mbuti knowledge 752
of forest lore. There is one incident known among the net hunters of Pygmies' being called to treat a village girl bitten by a Gaboon viper. The venom of this snake is both hemotoxic and neurotoxic and is normally fatal. The girl was bitten in the face, which was swollen like a balloon by the time she was treated. She was cured quickly and completely. Details of the snake-bite antidotes of these Mbuti are not known.

RATIONALIZATION

128
As in the parallel section for the archers,
speculation on problems of life and death are
considered under Religious Life (p. 235). A 536
word of warning, however, should be offered. 177
Mimicry is a widely attested Mbuti practice. 157
Their great ability in the art is equally well 811
confirmed on all sides. They are equally able to imitate speech as well as action and, with true

[P 232-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 233-A]

536 artistic flair, even enter into the thought pro-
177 cesses of their subjects. They answer questions
157 in precisely the way they want to answer them,
811 without necessarily any regard for the truth.
They will give a villager the answers that they think he wants, and similarly with the European. Even among themselves Pygmies may appear to be conducting a serious discussion in their own terms, but one or another will, in fact, be talking, consciously or unconsciously, as a villager or a European might talk. Single or even several instances of what individual Mbuti say therefore must be taken only with extreme caution merely as general indications of what they really mean, particularly when they are replying to questions. While we may be able to talk with some certainty about "rationalization among the Mbuti," we do not have nearly enough evidence to talk about "Mbuti rationalization."[1]

538 Putnam, despite his long sojourn among the
114 Mbuti of the Ituri, was always extremely
cautious concerning questions of origin and was very alert to the difficulty presented by the Mbuti mastery of imitation. The problem, as he saw it, was concerned not in the least

[NET HUNTERS]

In so far as the net hunters are much more 538
likely to tell a legend than they are to discuss
a question or expound a theory, legends
are a valuable source that should be tapped,
with the necessary cautions, to give us some
insight into Mbuti rationalization as opposed
to rationalization among the Mbuti.

ART

As among the archers, graphic art is limited 302
to the decoration of the human body (notably 531
the buttocks, legs, and face) and also of barkcloth.
As mentioned above, the juice of the [386]
gardenia fruit is used for painting body designs, [824]
which Putnam says are for pure esthetic effect
and of no magical significance. He believes, [304]
however, that some of the facial scarifications
may indicate clan membership. No details are
given. He adds that sometimes women name
their designs; for example, a spotted design
may be called "leopard." The design rests in the
hands of the artist rather than of the subject.

Sometimes even head shaving is performed in such a way as to leave simple designs.

Some carving is now being done (Fig. 49) in 532
imitation of village carvings. 177

As with the archers, music and dance are 533
vitally important means of expression to the 535

[P. 233-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

531 This account of music among the villagers in
191 the Ituri Forest region is certainly accurate. In
contrast, the music of the Mbuti differs on each
533 one of these four points. Though the music of
171 the Mbuti of the Epulu District is here specifi-
cally considered, it appears from all the known
184 material, including Schebesta's work on the
archers and other Pygmy groups, that there is
remarkable uniformity of music among African
Pygmies, not confined to the Ituri or even the
Congo. Even in the absence of drums, extreme
533 percussive effects are obtained by resonant
534 sticks, handclaps, and foot stamps; some vocal
184 effects achieved by the Mbuti might also
properly be described as percussive. As noted,
• [177] there is a lack of interest in instrumental
music, and styles are formalized; there is no
Arabic influence at all; there is no evidence
concerning change, except that up to now the
Mbuti have managed to preserve their distinctive
musical form in the face of strong
influences from all sides, which would seem to
indicate resistance to change.

53 As with the archers, song and dance both
overlap into the field of drama, and of the

[P. 235-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

Above all, the outstanding singer, however 555
young (so long as he is a hunter, therefore 53
qualified to participate, of course), plays one of
the most important roles in the meeting of the
molimo society. In the *molimo*, respect for skill
in song and dance seem, from the material to
hand, to surpass respect even for skill in hunting
and for old age.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

The religion of the net hunters is far less well 114
documented than that of the archers, since
little is known beyond what Schebesta (1950)
writes of the "Sua" regarding their religious
terminology, notions of God, and afterlife. On [575]
the other hand, the functioning of their men's
religious association (*molimo*) is far better
documented than that of the *tori* association of
the archers, both in Mrs. Putnam's notes and
my own (1960b).

As far as magical practices are concerned, 789
little information is available beyond a few
isolated descriptions of various ceremonies
mainly concerned with the hunt or the weather.
Many practices are certainly of village origin, 789
and some practices that are shared by both 177
groups have different functions. Thus the natu- 824
rally distorted stick (Fig. 53), known as *amati
a oni ganza* (the tortoise saw the circumcision),
is for the villagers a magical protection against

[P. 235-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 236-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]
[P.236-A]

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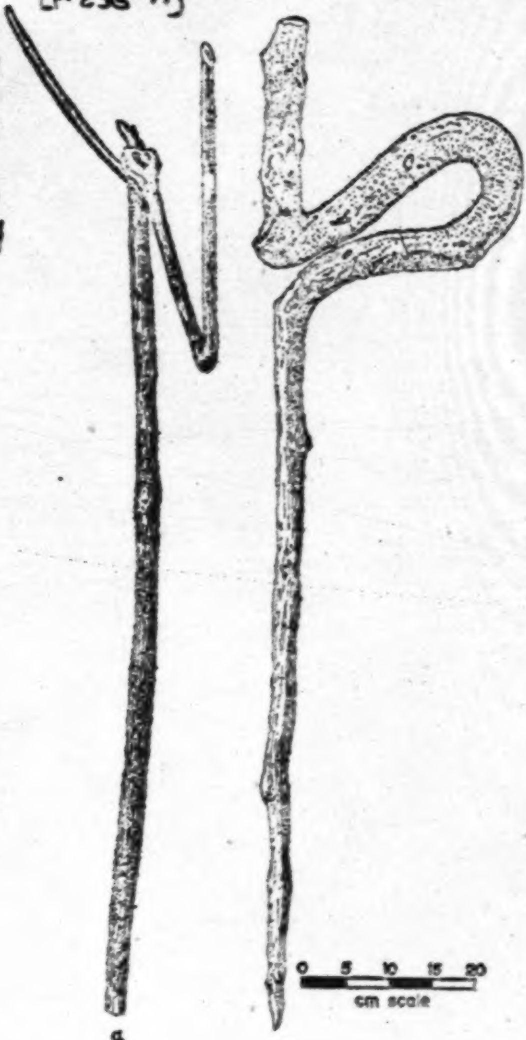

FIG. 53. a–b. Fetish sticks, ***amati a oni ganza***, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. "The tortoise saw the circumcision" is the name of the stick, but neither villagers nor Mbuti can give a coherent explanation of either the stick or its name. The villagers use it for protection against theft; the Mbuti net hunters on rare occasions may idly place it in the ground near a *molimo* hearth as an indication of spiritual presence.

[NET HUNTERS]

789
177 theft, but among the Mbuti is used as indication
824 of spiritual presence during the *molimo* festival.
For this section we follow the same outline as
128 that for the archers, but a fuller account of the
net-hunters' magico-religious complex is given
in the final section (pp. 248–259). It is excluded
from the present survey because the lack of
[P. 236-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 241-A]

761 work, the victim dies. If the victim himself
754 awakes and recognizes the *lozi* who is killing
266 him, or if he is bewitched by unwittingly sharing his food with a *lozi*, he can save himself by calling on that person to come to him. If the *lozi* comes he will be saved, otherwise he will die. But there are no instances that such ever happened.

761 This belief seems associated with death and
754 with people who are near to that particular
177 crisis. There is a recorded instance of two men, a Pygmy and a villager, who were both accused of being *lozi*. Some time later the villager died in the arms of the Pygmy; since then the village family have held that particular Pygmy in
[538] great respect. Among the Mbuti of this area, however, the existence of *ulozi* seems to be of little, if any, practical significance, except as subject matter for storytellers.

THE GODHEAD

776 The Putnam material does not support any
114 theory of a celestial God such as that described
[184] by Schebesta for both the archers and the net hunters. Putnam denies that there is any evi-

[P.243-A]

197 was also Putnam's, although he was keenly
[114] interested in the problem and spoke all the
major villager languages of the area fluently.
[177] All we can say is that the Ituri Mbuti now
speak the same languages as the villager tribes
with which they are or have been in closest
contact.

114 Questions of origin and history can be answered only by speculation and do not concern us at the moment.

[128] As stated, physical anthropology is too
[144] specialized a subject to be treated here, though the findings of detailed studies would be of great value not only in helping to answer questions of origin, but also in tracing affinities between different Pygmy and Pygmoid groups, estimating migratory movements, and determining the degree of miscegenation with villager tribes and the relative direction of such miscegenation. This last consideration is of particular importance with reference to the Mbuti-villager relationship.

P

ENVIRONMENT

182 184 The importance of environment in this particular study cannot be overestimated. The forest environment throughout the Ituri is much the same, so it cannot be held responsible for such differences as we may find between one Mbuti group and another. Such differences seem more likely to be due to the human environment, that is to say, varying degrees of Pygmy association with different villager tribes. P

182 The forest environment is important, however, in favoring the specific way of life followed by the nomadic hunting-and-gathering Mbuti communities. Z [182] That it certainly does not compel this mode of existence is witnessed by the very different and equally successful adjustment made to it by the other major group of forest inhabitants—the villagers. P 182 • 177 But by enabling the Mbuti to continue their nomadic way with comparative ease and to their almost entire satisfaction, the forest enables them to preserve their independence in the face of technologically superior and politically more organized villager opposition. By virtue of their particular response to the forest, the Mbuti retain their individuality socially, economically, politically, and intellectually.

P Z 182 The environmental factor sharply divides the forest people (Mbuti) from the non-forest people (villagers)—the true forest hunting-and-

[P 243-B]

182 184 With regard to material culture and technology, there is far more uniformity than divergence. The technology of the net hunters demonstrates a greater adaptation to the forest environment, and their material culture is consistent with the fact that they are more truly [482] nomadic than the archers. Heavy objects such as the mortars and drums mentioned by Schebesta could not be maintained by a nomadic band unless it was always within easy reach of the village.

ECONOMIC LIFE

224 184 In a comparison of the two major types of hunt, according to which we classify the Mbuti into archers and net hunters, three factors in particular are worth noting:

1. The net hunt, of all the hunting methods described (including the *begbe* beat of the archers), produces both the surest and the largest supply of meat. [411] [177] [439] The inadequacy of archery among the Mbuti, owing partly to inaccuracy with their small bows and partly to the generally poor visibility, may account in part for the greater economic dependence of the archer bands on their villager neighbors.

2. 224 476 621 562 184 The net hunt is essentially a cooperative activity, requiring the participation of the band as a whole, including women and children. It reinforces the strength of the band as such; it does not differentiate between the relationships of the men and the women toward the forest; and it establishes for each sex a basic and

[P. 244-B]

[P. 246-C]

Another very striking difference between the 184
archers and the net hunters concerns the initiation 177
of boys. As this is treated more fully below 881
(p. 252), we only indicate here the fact of the 608
total absence of any *karé* brotherhood between
Pygmy and villager initiates among the net
hunters. Schebesta, on the other hand, places [575]
great importance on this pact for his archers,
probably because of his insistence (1952, 281)
on the fact that the *nkumbi* initiation is an initiation
into the religious association of *toré* for
both Mbuti and villagers. This is denied by [114]
Costermans (1938) for the archers and is contradicted
by my own experience among the net
hunters. In any case, if there is a difference between
the two groups over the significance of
nkumbi initiation (and it may well be only a difference
of interpretation rather than of fact), it
does not seem directly related to any difference
in hunting technique.

Similarly, with marriage, separation, death, 184
funerals, childbirth, and other occasions with 796
ritual connections, such difference as exists in 177
the two accounts seems to be associated more
directly with prevailing differences in villager
custom rather than with any inherent differences
in the Mbuti communities. This, and the
nature and function of the closed associations,
are more properly the subject of discussion of
the Mbuti-villager relationship rather than the
difference between net hunters and archers,
which is our main concern here.

Schebesta (1950, 13) insists that there is a 184
cultural unity among the Ituri Mbuti, which 114
he believes is clearly visible in their magico-religious system. He may well be right. Probably he is, but his method of comparing terminological usage among a number of different Mbuti bands as though he were dealing with self-evident facts, while relying frequently on casual information, does little to support his theories. When dealing with cult practices, he is more concerned with the origin of a particular practice than with its sociological significance. He accepts statements and even legends at their face value and builds his elaborate theories on this flimsy foundation.

In trying to draw any useful comparison be- 184
tween the material on the archers and that for 121
the net hunters, we are constantly confronted with the question of origin. Is this or that custom or ritual of villager origin? If so, how far [177] •
has it been adapted and what significance has it? The latter question is more important for the social anthropologist than the former and is precisely the question we must ask. We are concerned not with the origin of any particular ritual but rather with its significance and its relationship to other practices in a system of related institutions. Thus when we deal with religious 000

[P. 248-D]

121 **Thus when we deal with religious** (or any other) institution common to both villager and Pygmy, we necessarily deal with the relationship between these two people. Unless we understand this relationship we cannot possibly understand the institution. We can understand the relationship only by observing something more fundamental than the origin of a particular practice in a specific group, let alone the more obvious facts concerning the trade relationship. As indicated in the present survey, even the *nkumbi* initiation cannot be taken at its face value as far as the Mbuti are concerned. • 197

No aspect of Mbuti life brings the people into more effective contact with their villager neighbors than the field of magic and religion. It seems that this is the field therefore in which we should attempt to understand the systems of values underlying the relationship between these two people.

[P 249-A]

THE MBUTI-VILLAGER RELATIONSHIP

121 177 439 [128] In the preceding sections we dealt with the survey briefly, mainly in order to test the validity of our classification of the Mbuti into net hunters and archers. We deliberately avoided, as far as possible, reference to the Mbuti-villager relationship, although in the final section on religious life it became particularly obvious that this relationship could not be ignored. In Mbuti society a number of institutions in one way or another are associated with or appear to be identical with villager institutions, and we must understand this connection. The only alternative is to assume that the relationship between the two peoples is one of straightforward symbiosis based on an exchange of meat for plantation products and that, in the course of this symbiosis, certain customs have been adopted and are practiced either separately or jointly. This often-drawn picture represents only the outward appearance of the facts. When one tries to understand it as part of a coherent system, however, it can be done only by creating a hypothetical Mbuti social system that is in fact a hodgepodge culled from all over the Ituri area, from which any offending portions are plucked with the excuse that they are of villager origin.

121 177 We must determine, then, the underlying facts, as opposed to the mere outward appearance: the extent to which various institutions have been adopted by the Mbuti; how far their underlying values have also been adopted, or

[P249-B]

[P 249-C]

how far only the outward form of the custom 121
has been taken over and the values rejected. 177
The most we can do is to clear the ground for such a study. We do so with reference only to the Epulu net hunters (unless otherwise stated), as our information is fullest here.

In the first place, what are the major points of contact between these two poeple? They may be listed as follows:

Material culture
Trade
Magical practice
Dance and festivity
Intermarriage
Ceremonial attendant on birth, puberty, marriage, and death

MATERIAL CULTURE

The adoption by the Mbuti of various villager 177
items of material culture or technological 439
skill has only one significance for us, which is the extent to which it places the Mbuti in a dependent position. This is difficult to estimate. It is difficult to visualize the Mbuti without metal and hard, though quite possible, to visualize them without plantains. But, even among [178]
the net hunters, luxuries tend to become necessities, and we must admit of the trend, if not the accomplished fact, toward economic dependency on the villagers.

TRADE

The bare facts only are known. The Mbuti P
supply the villagers with meat and with certain 439
forest products, such as roofing leaves or lianas, 433
in return for plantation products. The villager 177
invariably tries to enforce some service as well, P
with varying degrees of success. Either extreme 439
can be found: cases in which the relationship is 433
formal and binding in fact as well as theory, and 177 •
those in which the theory is held only by the villagers
and does not correspond to the fact, i.e.,
the Pygmy maintains his side of the trade relationship
only so long as it suits him. In my
experience the latter is the situation far more
often than otherwise.

Then again we must emphasize that trade is
not necessary on either side. The villagers could
perfectly well hunt if they had to, and the Pygmies
could equally well gather all their vegetable P
needs from the forest. Further, contrary [241]
to Schebesta's (1952, 112) assertion, the Mbuti
are perfectly capable of cultivating, given a

[P 249-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

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[p. 250-A]

clear space. Some of the net hunters in the Epulu area have tried, and with success, but quickly lose interest and revert to their old nomadic ways.

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The fact that there is no attempt to equate the supply of meat and the supply of plantains is also significant. Either side gives what it feels like giving, except that the Mbuti believe themselves free to take what they want if it is not given. There is also the Bira custom mentioned by Joset (1947, 13) of giving the first fruits to the Pygmies. The Mbuti seem to have control of this situation. The villagers have no means of preventing the Mbuti from returning to the depths of the forest whenever they wish. When the Pygmy hunting camp is some distance from the village, the villagers may send in to ask for meat, or the chief may even come himself.

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Sometimes the villagers try to gain control of the situation by supplying nets and claiming the appropriate share of a net owner. The Mbuti accept the nets, but see to it that only such game falls into them as they think fit. They eventually contest the ownership of the net, claiming to have added to it themselves and thrown away the damaged, village portion.

At most, it seems possible to regard the trade relationship only as one of mutual convenience. By itself, it is far too unformalized and unstable to provide the basis for the remarkably close relationship that does, in fact, exist between the two groups.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

MAGICAL PRACTICE

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177 It might be observed that the Pygmies have
789 adopted a number of villager magical practices;
certainly some individuals give the appearance
of having done so. But we cannot accept this as
significant, nor can we relate these practices
to other practices in Pygmy society until we
understand, for instance, the significance of the
old Pygmy who blew his magic whistle vigorously
at the sky to prevent rain and who, when
it poured, simply shrugged his shoulders and
P
[829] retreated to the shelter of his hut. This incident
may seem trivial, but there are many such incidents
that indicate a lack of faith in the efficacy
of such magical practices as the Pygmies
attempt.

P
224 Also to be considered, and more important
177 because it brings villager and Pygmy together
789 more directly, is the reported resort to villager
Z
witch doctors to improve the hunting. Sche-
789 [P 250-B]
177
563
[791]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 250-C]

besta (1950, 80) mentions ceremonies performed P 224
by the archers themselves to "open" the forest. 177 •
There is no evidence of such a practice among 789
the net hunters, but they may call in a villager 2
for the purpose. But here we should consider 789
Pygmy acumen. If he has not been supplying 563
the villagers with meat for some time, yet has 177
• been drawing supplies of bananas, he gives as P
his excuse the fact that the hunting has been [439]
poor. Such an excuse is safe enough, as the villagers never accompany the Pygmies on a hunt. Even if the villagers wait for them in the hunting camp, the Pygmies see to it that they never know how much game was actually caught. But the Pygmy may seek to reinforce his position by inviting the villager to improve the hunting. In doing this, he is a step ahead of the villager, who will himself insist on performing the ceremony if hunting is persistently bad. As far as P
one can judge from casual conversation among 224
themselves after such a ceremony, the Mbuti 789
have little faith in it. Further, they have their 533
own method of dealing with any critical situation. If the hunting is really bad they convoke the *molimo*. In effect, they "sing" the hunting well: there is no supplication and no prayer. The song may or may not be accompanied by a dance re-enacting a successful hunt, but, even if so, the stress is laid on the song and the participation of all the hunters.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

In so far as individual magic is concerned, it seems that its practice among the Mbuti, when taken over from the villager, is of no more significance than our own superstitious crossing of the fingers, touching of wood, or avoidance of walking under ladders. When Pygmies call in villager specialists to perform magic for them, mainly to improve hunting, we have at least to consider the possibility of a mere political maneuver.

P 789
P [177]

DANCE AND FESTIVITY

Villagers and Pygmies associate frequently at festive seasons or occasions. Pygmies will attend any village festival, and when they have an occasion of their own (such as the killing of an elephant) they first celebrate in their forest camp, then break camp and continue their celebrations in the village.

P 527 177
Z 527 177

Dance is an important feature of any celebration, villager or Pygmy, but in this the two never mix. They watch each other's dances with enjoyment, but take part only in fun. One ex-

Z P 535 177 [881]

[P. 250-D]

[P.251-A)

P
2
535 ception is the ritual *makata* dance which is held
177 only during the *nkumbi*.
[881] Even in ordinary times, when a hunting band
P is visiting a village, it may come down to the
535 main meeting place in the evening and dance.
177 The villagers expect it and regard it as one of
[517] their forms of entertainment, though they say
Z they consider the Pygmy dance barbaric. The
177
[86] Pygmy definitely fills the role of entertainer and
is not infrequently called on by the villagers to
dance.

P When the two groups meet on both festive
361 and ordinary occasions they keep apart from
571 each other. There is no leisure activity in which
177 they participate together, only a few ritual activities (which are discussed below). The Mbuti
Z
361 camp beside the village, on the edge of the plan-
361 tation where the forest begins. This physical
177 disposition of the two communities, which
571 seems to be invariable throughout the Ituri, and general Pygmy behavior in the village may well symbolize the contiguous nature of the relationship between the two peoples, as opposed to any close symbiosis such as was alleged by Schebesta.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[p.251-c]

general acceptance of villager superiority among P
the Mbuti, although some individuals may 582
rarely seek to increase their status by emulating 186
their villager neighbors. From general observation I would say that the hunting band tolerates an occasional marriage to a villager because of its economic and political advantages, to which they are very alive and of which they take full
advantage when it suits them. They receive P
little payment for the girl they give (a fraction Z
of what the villager would give another vil- [583]
lager), but they consider that they then have a [439]
villager they can well and truly "eat."

Ceremonial Attendant on Birth, Initiation, Marriage, and Death

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All the areas of contact between the Mbuti 563
and their villager neighbors so far mentioned 177
have been in or near the village. This point is P
of no small importance. The Pygmies always 177
make the move, make contact or break it, and 62
they take care that, apart from occasional visits 361
from villager individuals to their hunting camp, all contact takes place in the village. Also, the areas of contact so far described could all be explained away at a more or less superficial level. The degree to which trade and adoption of villager magical practices and beliefs actually affect the forest life of the Mbuti is bound to vary from band to band. But among the Epulu net hunters, at least, the points of contact described above have not affected their nomadic way of life unduly.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

These Mbuti, however, just as much as oth- Z
ers, *appear* to have adopted villager religious 563
beliefs and practices. This could be taken as 796
symptomatic of a much closer relationship in- P
volving a shared system of values. We cannot 177
help noticing, further, that by retaining a mo- 796
nopoly of ritual specialists the villagers effec-
tively seem to assert their superiority over the P
Mbuti. When birth or death takes place among Z
the Mbuti while they are in the vicinity of the [844]
village, the local villagers take a prominent part [764]
in the appropriate festivities, appropriate ac- [765]
cording to their custom, that is. Marriage be- P
tween Pygmies, while not always subject to 583
ceremonial "ratification" in the village, is usu- 585
ally performed twice: once according to the 177
simple Mbuti custom of arranging and effecting Z
an exchange of brides with the necessary cour- 563
tesies of prestation and feasting but with no 585
other ceremonial; and once according to the

[P.251-D]

P [P.252-A]
583 local villager custom. The latter ceremony is
585 conducted entirely by the villagers and at their
• 177 expense. On these occasions the villager takes
Z the leading part and carries out his own ritual,
563 but the Pygmy does not let this supplant his
585 own indigenous way of recognizing the event.
The villager ceremony is something the Pygmy
adds to his own.

P With initiation the situation may seem to be
177 different. The Mbuti have not only adopted the
881 villager custom of initiation accompanied by
575 circumcision, known as *nkumbi*, but they attend
Z the same initiation schools which are always
563 run by villagers, never by Pygmies. Initiation
881 is nothing if not entry into a very definite indig-
575 enous system of values, yet here we have the
Mbuti placing themselves in a totally subordinate position. The *nkumbi*, according to Schebesta (1952, 281), initiates the youth, Pygmy or villager, into membership of the Lese *tori* association (for the archers) or its Bira equivalent, the *molimo* (for the net hunters). The function

P of this association is not clear from his various
177 accounts, but he is emphatic that it is closely
881 connected with religious belief and practice. If
575 so, then he would be perfectly justified in stating,
Z as he does (Schebesta, 1952, 278), that
563 nothing has made the Mbuti so dependent on
881 the villager as the ***nkumbi***. It would all fall
575 neatly into the picture he gives, or tries to give,
of a clear-cut symbiotic relationship between
the two peoples.

P Schebesta (1952) describes initiation for the
177 net hunters. All that he says would be confirmed
881 by casual observation of the practice of ***nkumbi***
Z in the Epulu District, among the net hunters
563 and their Bira neighbors. As may be seen in the
881 survey, however, there is one striking difference
P between the account by Putnam and that
Z by Schebesta, and that is the lack in Putnam's
[114] description of any institution such as ***karé***
[608] brotherhood. Apart from this, from Putnam's detailed account of the 1935–1936 ***nkumbi*** at Kokonyange and from my own observations of the ***nkumbi*** at Effundi Somali's village (near Epulu) in 1951, there would be nothing to contradict Schebesta's fact or theory. The Pygmy boys appear to go through the ***nkumbi*** on equal terms with the villager boys, except that the ceremony, instruction, and the camp itself are run entirely by the villagers and according to a custom that is generally acknowledged to be of villager (probably Bira) origin.

[P 252-B]

[P.252-C]

In the survey, in giving my own account of 114
the next *nkumbi* (1954) that I witnessed in the 186
Epulu District, I show how, under peculiar cir- 881
cumstances, when no villagers are present in the initiation camp, the Mbuti men and boys take the opportunity to mock both the villagers and their ceremony. This burlesque would not be enough in itself to indicate that the Mbuti completely rejected the *nkumbi* or, indeed, that they are doing any more than many individuals or groups do who occupy subordinate positions.[1] I suggest, however, in the survey, that [554]
there is such a rejection, and that the Mbuti (177).
undergo the *nkumbi* in order to acquire status in villager society; further, that the *nkumbi* for them is quite dissociated from initiation into the *molimo* association.

In order to follow this important point further, as it is one of the most significant pieces of information we have on the villager-Mbuti relationship, I must refer to a full account of the 1954 *nkumbi*, compiled from my field notes (Turnbull, 1957). From this we get sufficient indications to justify a rejection of Schebesta's analysis of Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*.

P 114 186 881

This analysis, in any case, could stand only by isolating the ***nkumbi*** or by relating it only to other villager institutions in the villager society. When we try to relate the ***nkumbi*** to Pygmy institutions, Schebesta's interpretation cannot hold.

Z 563 881 P 177 881 186

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In the 1954 ***nkumbi*** there was a very evident divorce between initiative and authority. The villagers took most of the initiative; they decided when the ***nkumbi*** should be held and made all the necessary arrangements. Villagers carried out the operations and gave all the instruction. But their authority over the Pygmy *ganza* (members of the ***nkumbi***) was far from complete. The Pygmies decided which boys should take part, without reference to the villagers; though they made use of Effundi Somali, a village chief, to reinforce their own demand that a certain boy should take part (Turnbull, 1957, 197). During and following the operation, the Mbuti fathers acted contrary to villager custom and in the face of villager disapproval by comforting their children. Both fathers and children ignored the various taboos imposed by the vil-

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[1] The burlesquing attitude of the Mbuti is significant but could possibly be interpreted merely as a psychological reaction to subordination. It is in the light of other facts that we think differently.

[P. 252-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.253-A]

Z lagers when it suited them to do so. In the dis-
563 pute over the visit of the *ganza* to the forest
881 hunting camp, the villagers were quite unable
P to enforce their will or even to enforce the com-
• 177 promise they finally effected with the Mbuti.
881 The villagers themselves made no major deci-
186 sions concerning the arrangement or carrying out of the *nkumbi* without at least discussing the matter with the Pygmy fathers. No difference was observable in the preparations or the ceremony that could be attributed to the fact that Mbuti only were being initiated.

The account given shows not only the extent to which the villagers were unable to control the *ganza*, but also the thoroughness with which they attempted to dominate the initiation. Despite the fact that the *ganza* were entirely Pygmy, for the villagers the *nkumbi* was nonetheless sacred. They were interested in the *nkumbi* itself rather than in the individuals participating. Whether or not the villagers thought that by initiating the Mbuti they were subjecting them to tribal and supernatural authority is uncertain, though Schebesta (1952, 278; 1948, chap. 7) so suggests. The evidence considered here suggests that the villagers not only lacked control over the Pygmy *ganza*, but were not particularly rigorous in maintaining it, except in so far as any desecration of the initiation camp or the *nkumbi* itself was concerned. It seems that the villager was primarily interested in the *nkumbi* as a tribal festival; if any subordination of the Pygmies took place, it was incidental.

177 Similarly any subordination on the part of
186 the Pygmies was incidental and insignificant,
though they lost no opportunity for maintaining
881 their individuality when their feelings
clashed with those of the villagers. Unlike the
latter, they had no interest in the ***nkumbi*** as
such. This lack of interest was manifest from
the outset, when the village was in a state of
festive turmoil in preparation for the ceremony,
and the Pygmy camp was unchanged. This lack
of interest was frequently manifest as total
disrespect. Apart from the breaking of such
touch and food taboos as were imposed by
villager custom, and the general burlesquing
among the *ganza* as described in the account,
there was the attitude of the rest of the Mbuti
band—notably the women and children. The
[357] young children in their forest camp found a new
game to play. They were the *ganza*, imitating all

[P 253-B]

[P. 253-C]

the major aspects of life in the initiation camp, 177
including some of the ordeals. They not only 186
knew the initiation songs, but were taught them 881
by their mothers, who even more than their [857]
uninitiated male children were supposed to be
in complete ignorance of such matters.

When the *ganza* moved to the forest, the 177
instructors did not come with them, and the 881
ganza had only occasional visits from one vil-
lager who stayed in the nearby Mbuti hunting
camp. There were no ordeals during this time,
no singing except when visited by the solitary
villager, and no other form of instruction by the
Pygmies to replace that of the villagers. The
boys did not accompany the hunt. It seemed to [527]
be, for both children and the adult members of
the *ganza*, a holiday camp, free from the rigors
of the initiation school.

But if the Mbuti showed no respect for the 177
ceremonial or ritual significance of the *nkumbi*, 861
they could scarcely avoid respecting the physi- 881
cal discipline imposed by the various ordeals
they had to undergo. This was a frequent topic

of conversation. Both by their conversation and their behavior they showed that they were well aware of the benefit of this training for the children. The older men talked of ordeals that their "fathers" had experienced (apparently without reference to any villager *nkumbi*) in order to make them into men and hunters (both terms were used). They were always critical of any sign of excessive harshness on the part of the villager instructors and protected their children from it. But, on the other hand, the fathers showed no sympathy for a boy who could not endure the normal rigors of camp life and accept the routine ordeals without complaint, and it will be remembered that the boy who became ill himself insisted on returning to his place among the other boys before he had completely recovered (Turnbull, 1957). 177 861 881

It is, at the moment, an open question whether the Mbuti respect the physical discipline of the *nkumbi* because of its effect on the boys, or because of the status it gives their children in the eyes of the villagers, under normal circumstances equating the Mbuti (at least in terms of manliness) with their fellow villager initiates. The fact that no ordeals were practiced in the forest camp is perhaps an indication that the Mbuti do not lay very much stress on the physical and mental training aspect of the *nkumbi*. These are, in any case, benefits that [554]

[p. 253 - D.]

P [P.254-A]
177 they could quite well achieve in their own way.
881 Such practical benefits as there may be do not
861 demonstrate why the Mbuti should participate
Z in the villager *nkumbi* any more than does the
[563] often alleged subordination of the Mbuti to
villager authority and custom. The obvious rejection by the Mbuti of the significance attributed to the *nkumbi* by the villager and the relatively passive acceptance by the villager of this rejection serve only to emphasize the hiatus between the two people. They certainly do not demonstrate that the *nkumbi* serves to draw them closer together or to assert the authority of the villager over the Pygmy.

P This hiatus becomes even more evident when
Z we consider the religious aspect of the *nkumbi*,
181 as far as the Mbuti are concerned. It is a hiatus
182 not only between two ways of living but be-
tween two ways of thinking, and it shows that
881 we are dealing with two totally different sets of
values. What the *nkumbi* achieves for the village boy bears little resemblance to what it achieves for the Pygmy. Ceremonial, ritual, and magic are ways of interpreting or influencing the supernatural in terms of the natural, and in his forest environment the Pygmy has relatively little need of either. It is not surprising then that his attitude to the ceremonial and ritual of the *nkumbi* differs from that of the villager. To

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

To
Z the villager the masked dancers described in the
182 account of the 1954 ***nkumbi*** (Turnbull, 1957,
881 193) represent the ***ngosa*** bird, indicating the
776 presence of a benevolent spirit. Similarly, the
778 bullroarer represents supernatural power. The
[825] various taboos applied to the *ganza* express
[532] village subordination to that power which is
[535] sufficiently strong to prevent the villagers from
staying in the camp over night even though it
meant allowing an already unruly *ganza* further
scope for getting out of control. The ***nkumbi***
places the villager initiates in a definite rela-
Z tionship to the supernatural. It is closely con-
[769] nected with tribal lore and the ancestor cult.

P The Pygmies have no tribal lore and no an-
177 cestor cult. To them the masked dancers were
881 the villagers, André and Sabani, and the bull-
776 roarer was a piece of wood whirled around on
778 the end of a length of twine. The "*ngosa* bird"
829 and the "voice of the spirit," for the Mbuti,
were neither "real" nor did they represent any
reality. They were empty and rather ineffective
theatrical devices, an opinion evidenced both by
conversation among the ganza at
night and in their constant
burlesque.
[P. 254-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

"Initiation" in its broadest sense implies admission to some form of exclusive association or adoption of a certain system of values. The 1954 *nkumbi* cannot be regarded as initiation for the Mbuti under this definition. Although the circumstances were unusual, in that no villager boys were available to share the *nkumbi* with the Pygmy boys, it is precisely this factor that throws a new light on the more usual joint participation of both groups. If it is not "initiation" for the Mbuti, what is it? P 881

We seem to be in the presence of an attempt to maintain or establish some kind of common ground between two neighboring peoples who can find no common values, yet who inevitably come into contact with each other. We have seen that the original point of contact was the use of the Mbuti, by warring villagers, as mercenary soldiers, spies, and scouts. While acting in this capacity the Mbuti were necessarily dependent on the villagers for food supplies. The Mbuti were also used by the villagers to hunt elephant and to bring in tusks for the ivory trade. But, with the cessation of tribal warfare and the government control of ivory, these relationships came to an end. The villager no longer had any use for the Pygmy, who in P Z 177 181 P Z 17 439

[P. 254-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.255-A]

P turn was free to return to his nomadic existence.
Z We can suppose that the present relationship
17 between the villagers and the Mbuti originated
439 in this way and not in economic dependence or
physical subjugation. Whereas it was once a
clear patron-client relationship, it now seems to
have no such clear basis, either economic or
political.

P There is, among both the archer and the net-hunter
439 Mbuti, a trade relationship with the
184 villagers, but this now appears to be economically
artificial rather than necessary. Particularly
among the net hunters, who are more
nomadic than the archers, this trade relationship
is little more than one of mutual
P convenience. By itself, trade does not provide a
Z sufficiently stable basis for Pygmy-villager
177 interaction. The spasmodic nature of contact
648 between the two peoples complicates the issue
P further. Also, because of their nomadic existence
[B21] and the loose structure of band composition,
any Pygmy net hunter establishes relationships
with villagers in different villages,
quite possibly of different tribes. It seems that
greater stability is precisely one objective that
Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi* achieves, for
this festival is common to the majority of the
tribes in the area.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

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If we look at the situation in reverse, the fact that the Mbuti simultaneously participate in the *nkumbi* and reject its significance indicates the instability of their relationship with the villagers. The villagers would undoubtedly like to assert their superiority but are unable to maintain effective control over the nomadic Mbuti, either as individuals or in bands, during the *nkumbi* or at any other time. The *nkumbi*, however, does at least place the villagers in an overt position of dominance. On the other hand, the Mbuti would like to be completely free from subordination to the villagers, yet they find it as necessary to submit to initiation in villager society as the villagers find it necessary to accept them as candidates. The *nkumbi* undoubtedly gives the villagers an opportunity to drive the first blow in asserting their superiority over the Mbuti, but at the same time it gives the Pygmy status, as well as economic benefits, in any village throughout the region. It also strengthens his own identity as a Pygmy by enabling him to reject the villager system of values in mimetic burlesque. The 1954 *nkumbi* shows the extent to which these particular Mbuti preserve their "in-group" feeling.

[P. 255-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 255-C]

shows the extent to which these particular Mbuti preserve their "in-group" feeling. 000

A Pygmy net-hunting band is powerfully integrated yet fluid, and its contact with alien societies is necessarily unformalized. Less well-knit bands, such as may be found among the archers described by Schebesta, may find it possible to enter into some kind of symbiotic relationship with the villagers, but not so an active, nomadic, net-hunting band. Some kind of relationship must be established because of the inevitability of contact. As the smaller, more powerfully integrated group, the Pygmies must make the move to fit into the larger, looser group. But there is no question of absorption; the smaller group preserves its identity. The *nkumbi*, and participation in or adoption of other villager ceremonies, provide the Mbuti with an opportunity both for establishing a place in villager society and for asserting their independent set of values by opposition. The antagonism that remains and is even heightened by this opposition is smoothed over to some extent by the secondary mechanism by which the two groups attempt to express their relationship-mutal trade

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tionship—mutual trade. Trade may be an initial step in the direction of the symbiosis described by Schebesta (1941, 263) for the archers and their Lese neighbors. Joint participation in the *nkumbi* indicates no more than a willingness on both sides to acknowledge an unavoidable relationship based, as much as anything, on mere territorial propinquity.

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What at first appears to be a conformity by the Mbuti to villager custom now appears as a superficial conformity at best and one that barely conceals a detachment of two ways of life. By his participation in the *nkumbi*, and, we may suspect, in other villager institutions, the Mbuti shows his willingness to accept an outwardly subordinate position in villager society. This acceptance is partly responsible for the popular notion that the relationship is one of master-servant or patron-client. His rejection of the inner significance of the ceremonial shows not only a superficiality in the process of acculturation and assimilation but a conscious effort on the part of the Pygmy to keep his two worlds apart—the sacred world of the forest, with one set of values, and the profane world of the villager, invader of the forest, with another set of values. The Epulu Mbuti, at least, have

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[P. 255-D]

[P. 256-A]

177 as yet assumed village values in name only, and
18 only for the duration of their contact outside
the forest where their own values do not apply.

177 This interpretation of the function of the
18 *nkumbi* initiation ceremony as providing an
121 outward symbol of the association of two neigh-
[881] boring peoples that, for one reason or another,
come into contact and cooperate is very similar
to the interpretation by Peristiany (1951, 299)
of initiation among the Pokot and Karama-
jong: "The recognition of a common system of
age ranks by these two neighbouring peoples
permits them to move with ease in each other's
society and allows, during peace-time, the ex-
tension of social bonds and the obliteration of
cultural frontiers."

[191] In the Ituri such a statement could also apply to relationships not only between Mbuti and villagers but between neighboring village tribes themselves, such as the Ndaka, Bira, and Lese.

177 We indicate above that the *nkumbi* could not
881 be considered as "initiation" by the Mbuti
18 who practice it, as it does not admit them to
any exclusive (villager) association or to any
exclusive system of values, except possibly on a
superficial level. We also suggest that the

177 881 18 *nkumbi* offers the Mbuti an opportunity for asserting their individuality at the same time that they are subordinating themselves to the villagers, by asserting an independent system of values. In the *nkumbi*, as in other villager ceremonies practiced by the Mbuti, there is an opposition between the pygmaean forest world and the non-forest world of the villagers. This subject is dealt with in the final section; here a word should be said about the forest values themselves.

575 In the survey we mention two exclusive associations to which the net-hunting Mbuti are admitted—the *molimo* for the men, and the *elima* for the women. As far as our observations go, there is no reason at all for connecting the Mbuti *molimo* association with the *lusumba* or the *molimo* of the neighboring Bira and Ndaka. They may or may not have similar origins, but in the present situation they seem entirely dissociated. We may well suspect that this is also
575 881 true of the archers' *toré* society. It is certain, at all events, that the *nkumbi* by itself does not initiate Mbuti boys into membership of the *molimo* (by this term I always refer to the Mbuti institution unless otherwise stated). At the end of the 1954 *nkumbi* the boys all reverted

[P 256-B]

The function of these asso- 575
ciations[1] is to regulate the relationship of these 182
Mbuti with their forest world, to maintain the 796
normality of that relationship and to restore it 778
when disturbed, by rousing the God of the For- 776
est from his sleep by song, echoed into the forest 533
by means of the *molimo* horn in the case of
formal meetings of the men's association. This
god is the source of good and bad, and it is
therefore sufficient to waken him. There is no [782]
formal supplication phrased in words as such.

The *molimo* and *elima* are distinct from vil- 575
lage association with similar names and from 177
whatever association it is into which the *nkumbi*
initiates the villagers. Mbuti participation in
the *nkumbi*, as in other village ceremonies, is
part of the mutual attempt of two peoples
forced together by historical reasons and pre-
sent territorial juxtaposition to regularize their
relationship, each to his own satisfaction. Trade [439]
is another such expression of their relationship;
it is not the basis of it. Further, participation in [881]
the *nkumbi* involves an opposition between two [554]
sets of values (those of the villagers and those [171]
of the Mbuti taking part), as *nkumbi* initiation [181]
does not qualify the Mbuti for entry into his
own religious association nor accord him any
status in his own society. It enables him to
move as an adult in villager society and gives
the two peoples some common ground involving
a superficially subordinate position for the
Mbuti.

[1] [Molimo and Elima associations
--Analyst]

[P. 258-C]

533 177 178 18 [621] tion. Once in the village, however, forest values are cast off. Interpersonal relationships become looser; the hunting band as such disintegrates into so many individual families; forest norms of behavior are cast to the winds; forest song is abandoned. Drum-dance replaces forest music entirely. This is the type of dance and music described by Schebesta (1941, 245). It is never heard in a forest hunting camp among the net hunters, only in the neighborhood of the village. It seems that the Mbuti regard the village primarily as a place for eating, drinking, and making merry, free from the rigors, however pleasurable, of forest life. These rigors demand periods of relaxation. I have suggested that the honey season was once a major holiday season for the Mbuti but that visits to the village are now taking its place.

177 18 533 Through their relationship with the villagers, the Mbuti find an opportunity for relaxation, an excursion into the profane world, a period of license which ends, however, in a re-alignment and re-affirmation of the values of their own sacred world of the forest, all quite dramatically seen in the way in which a visit to the vil-

[P. 259-B]

[P. 259-C]

lage often comes to an end. After a few days or weeks of drinking and dancing, one evening the drum-dance is replaced by song, probably a subdued hunting song sung by a group of dejected-looking Pygmies sitting around a fire in their village camp. They get increasingly melancholy until one evening, probably a day or two after they have stopped drum-dancing, they start singing *molimo* songs. The next morning they are suddenly full of life again, and, despite all protests from the villagers, they pack their few belongings and return to the forest, singing loudly as they go. 177 18 533 [152]

The evidence considered suggests that there is a dissociation of two sets of values for the Mbuti—those that apply to the village and those that apply to the forest. The two sets of values, corresponding to two worlds, are accompanied by two modes of behavior. It is a case of culture contact without acculturation; such villager institutions as the Mbuti seem to adopt are adopted and are significant only with reference to their village life. The relationship between the two people is, on the one hand, characterized by various attempts to formalize it through trade, participation in various ceremonies and activities, and, on the other hand, it is characterized by a sharp opposition of two different sets of values. This opposition is an opposition of the forest to the non-forest; the humans, to the animals; the Mbuti, to the villagers. 177 18 121

In the final section we consider some legends 128
collected by Anne Putnam among these same 186
Mbuti, and observe in them more of the Mbuti 539
attitude to the villagers and how they equate themselves, as humans, with the forest and with "good" animals, as opposed to the villagers who are associated with destructive animals and *satani*.

MBUTI VALUES AS SEEN IN LEGEND

539

In order to understand the Pygmy values [181]
more clearly, and to assess how far the Mbuti [186]
rejection of villager values is effectively valid [197]
and how far it is merely the psychological reaction of a subordinate people, it is worth considering a collection of nearly 200 legends noted down by Anne Putnam during the last years of
her stay in the Ituri. These were all related by 539
four of the more important hunters belonging 114
to an Epulu net-hunting band. I myself have heard many of them told by these same hunters

[P.259-D]

[P. 261-C]

They went off into the Forest together. The one man lived with his wife, but time went by and still they had no children. The other Pygmy saw this and decided that he would go to the main hunting camp. There he found another woman. He lived with her, and in due course a child was born. The Pygmy ran to his friend in the Forest in great joy, and told him the news. His friend immediately left the Forest and also lived with the woman in the hunting camp. They too had a child. And that is how Pygmies began, and how they became so plentiful. 539

Basi

Another legend tells how two brothers fought over an ax.

One was killed, so the other said to his nephews and nieces: "See, I have killed your father. From now on, your family and mine are enemies. We will live apart; you will live over there and I will live here." And they parted forever.

That, a social anthropologist might say, was the beginning of fission and fusion.

But apart from this, and one legend telling how a great dreamer dreamed and was told how 539
the Pygmies should make nets out of *nkusa* vine 177
and hunt with nets, the remainder of legends 787
dealing with the traditional past refer to relationship with the villagers, a subject of much more interest to the Mbuti.

1: Turnbull E-4 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

There is a particularly nice contrast in the Z
way the villagers tell how the relationship be- 539
gan and the way the Pygmies tell the same 177
story. Here is the villager version: 186

In the old days the Pygmies lived in holes in the P
trees, and nobody ever saw them. But one day a real 539
man and his wife were walking through the forest and 177
heard a strange sound. It was very loud and noisy. "What is this strange noise?" said the man to his wife, who replied, "I have no idea." "Well," said the man, "we will have to find that noise and see what it is. I'll go home and think what we should do." So he went home and thought, and he prepared a trap. He baited it with a banana, so that when the animal or whatever was making the noise grabbed the banana, an arrow would come down and pierce it.

The next morning the man and his wife set out with the trap and fixed it at the entrance to the hole in the tree from where the noise was coming. Then they went off a little way and waited to see what would happen. In a little while one of the Pygmies came to the mouth of the hole and saw the banana. He said to himself, "What is this?" Finally, his curiosity got the better of him and he made a grab for the banana. But as he touched it, the trap came down, and his hand was pierced by the arrow. He let

[P. 261-D]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.262-A]

Z out an awful scream. The man and his wife came
rushing to the trap and seized him. They released
539 him. The wife said, "What is this?" They stared at
177 him and examined him carefully, and the wife ad-
mired his barkcloth. They took him back to their
186 home and gave him lots of good things to eat.

P One day the Pygmy said, "I have many relations
539 in that hole." So the man fixed his trap and went
• 177 back to the hole and put down his trap with a banana
as bait. In a little while a hand came out of the hole and reached for the banana. The trap fell and the arrow pierced the flesh and the Pygmy let out an awful scream. The man and his wife rushed to the trap and took the Pygmy home. The first Pygmy saw them coming and shouted for joy, because they had caught his wife.

The next day the man and his wife went back with the trap, but all the other Pygmies refused to be tempted out of their hole, so they waited and waited in vain. The Pygmies in the hole said: "See, the other two grabbed the banana and were taken away. They must have been eaten up."

In the meantime the two Pygmies who lived in the village were having a very good time, and the real people gave them lots and lots of food. In due course they had a child, and then another child. When those children grew up they had children, and their children had children, and that is why there are so many Pygmies in the forest today.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

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The Mbuti, as might be imagined, tell it differently.

The Mbuti were out hunting termites because, as you know, termites are good to eat. They built their houses. When night arrived the wives cooked food for their husbands. Then they all went to sleep. But in the middle of the night they heard a cry, "Oh! Oh! Oh!" "What is that?" said one Pygmy. "It is coming from over there!" cried another, pointing into the Forest. "Yes, it is a great noise coming from the old *liboyo* tree!" shouted a third. "We should go and see what it is!" They took their spears and crept up to the old *liboyo* tree. There they found a large hole in the ground, and they thought they could see faces peering up at them. But it was very dark, and they were afraid to go too close, so they returned to their camp.

"Tomorrow we shall go and see what it is all about," they said. "We shall go and we shall smoke it out of the hole, whatever it is."

The next morning they went back to the *liboyo* tree, carrying bundles of sticks and some fire wrapped up in *mongongo* leaves. They put the fire to the wood and started filling the hole with smoke. Then they heard voices calling out from the hole: "I'm dying, I'm dying! Oh, let me out, Brother, I'm dying!"

The Pygmies stopped the smoke and hurried to

[P. 262- B]

[P. 262-C]

help whatever it was out of the hole, and out came P
people—Real People—much bigger than themselves, 539
holding their heads and crying. They were villagers. 177 •
"Where do you come from?" asked the Pygmies. 186
"We don't know!" answered the Real People. "We Z
fell into the hole by the old *liboyo* tree and then you 539
started filling it with smoke. We should have died if 177
you had not helped us out."

The Pygmies took the Real People with them, back to their termite camp, saying: "Come back with us to our termite camp. Now we shall all live together; there will be no fighting between us. You will be the Real People, truly, truly; you will be the Real People, truly."

Basi

P
But the Mbuti have their own notions as to 539
the origin of the "Real People." This legend 186
characterizes their attitude to the villager—an attitude they never express in the presence of the villager, finding it more profitable to let the villagers continue to think that even the Mbuti themselves recognize the great superiority of the "Real People."

In treating the Mbuti art forms, we must 182
determine both their function and their meaning, 53
to see how far they form part of the social structure, possibly as regulative mechanisms, and the values they express, maintain, or enforce. In so doing we can reach the heart of the Mbuti magico-religious system which promises, from the material presented here, to be of particular interest and to provide useful material for comparison with the magico-religious systems of other forest peoples, hunters and gatherers.

The Mbuti-villager relationship is probably 177
the major problem that arises from the survey. 439
We try to show, particularly by citing the 1954 *nkumbi* initiation, that this relationship is not a straightforward symbiosis based on necessary trade amounting to a division of labor between the two people. Such a division of labor exists, but it is an outward symbol of the relationship rather than its inner core. In studying this problem we are studying social change which is likely to assume a different form for each hunting band we consider. There are practical 177
grounds for the difference between the relationship 439
of the archers to their villager neighbors 184
and that of the more nomadic net hunters to

[P.273-D]

[P.274-A]

177 theirs. There is also evidence, but in regrettably
•177 little detail, that certain hunting bands main-
439 tain a client-patron relationship by specializing
184 in elephant hunting, bringing the tusks to the
villagers, on whom they rely for all vegetable
products and on the edge of whose villages they
live in permanent camps.

177 However, no matter how great or little the
degree of dependence on the villagers, the
Mbuti for whom we have any information all
seem to maintain a distinct individuality in op-
position to the villagers, despite their apparent
[881] adoption of villager institutions and even of
villager language. With regard to the adoption
of villager customs, the 1954 *nkumbi* shows the
degree to which this adoption may be a mere
superficial conformity and may indeed conceal
a formal rejection of villager values. A very
careful study should be made of all such insti-
tutions held in common, if not practiced jointly.

177 It is indeed at this level that we seem to find
184 some excuse for referring to the Ituri Mbuti as
a single people rather than as consisting of a
number of widely scattered, semi-independent

P hunting bands. We seem to have, throughout,
177 this clear opposition between the forest and the
184 outer world, the Pygmies and the villagers, the
human and the non-human worlds. As far as we
can see, both the archer communities and the
net hunters maintain their separateness, however
close their symbiosis with the villagers
may appear to be. They maintain not only a
physical distance between themselves and their
villager neighbors, but also a spiritual one,
emphasizing their own indigenous system of
values in opposition to that of the villagers. It
remains for further field work to tell us whether
the system of values held by each group is the
P same, common to all Mbuti, or not. Despite the
[575] difference between Schebesta's account of the
[114] archer *toré* association and my own account of
the *molimo*, a re-interpretation of the material
published by Schebesta could easily suggest
that there is a remarkable degree of unity here.
But as presented, the facts could be interpreted
in any number of ways.

P The Mbuti is always conscious of his rela-
829 tionship with the villager and of the subordi-
648 nate position he is forced to accept. It is a major
186 consideration, it seems, that must be taken into
Z account in every aspect of his life when he is in
563 the village (here I refer mainly to the net

[P. 274-B]

PLATE 27[1]

Pygmy Physical Types, Epulu District, Central Ituri

888 301 197 a. An old Mbuti woman, probably around 60 years of age. She enjoys the respect and affection of her entire band. The pendant charm around her neck is of village origin, a gift from the Arabisé tribe of Ngwana cultivators. For them it is magic; for her it is purely decorative.

854 b. An Mbuti mother and child are close throughout life, but never more so than during the infancy of the child. Wrapped in a specially prepared piece of barkcloth, symbolic of the protection afforded the Mbuti by the forest, the infant is seldom out of its mother's arms. When it is, however, any woman or older girl may take the mother's place, holding, fondling, and even nursing the child.

[1]/Plate 27 appears on page 287--Analyst/

[P. 286]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 27-A/

/Caption appears on p.286/
[P.287-A]

PLATE 31[1]

516 MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, STRIPPING,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

287 Barkcloth manufacture is predominantly the work of youths or young hunters. The
412 first step, after the strip of bark is cut from a vine, is the stripping of the outer bark. Here a
883 youth uses his leg as a platform for support and works with a village-made machete. In the
177 absence of a metal blade, it is said by the Mbuti that they use slivers of bamboo or sharp
stones as knives.

[1] /Plate 31 appears on page 295--Analyst/

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883
516
177

[P.295]

/Plate 31/
/Caption appears on p. 294/

PLATE 32[1]

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, HAMMERING AND DECORATION, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

287 a. The stripped lengths of bark are softened in water or over a fire and then hammered
412 out with the end of an ivory tusk. Usually such hammers are hafted, though sometimes they
237 are used, as is the more rare wooden hammer, without being hafted. The tin can, the grass,
• 177 and the banana leaves indicate that this camp is in the near vicinity of a village.

b. Decoration. Women do all the decorating of barkcloth. They smear red *nkula* paste
287 onto the cloth with their fingers, or use small twigs to trace outlines in the black juice of
462 the gardenia fruit or the blue dye obtained from certain citrus fruits.
531

386 [1] /Plate 32 appears on page 297--Analyst/

[P. 296]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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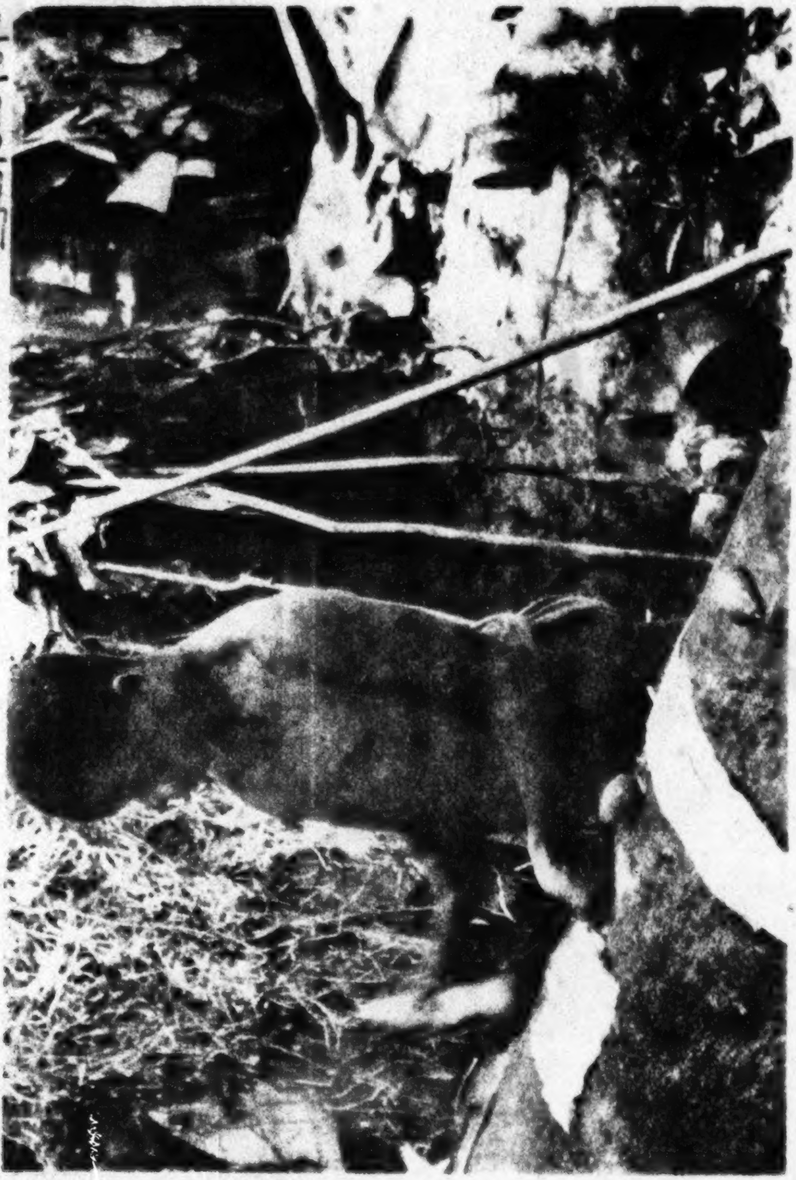

/Plate 32-A/

/Caption appears on p.296/

[P.297-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

PLATE 35[1]

NET HUNTING, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

224 a. The kill. When an animal falls into the nets, nearby men and youths run to catch it before it tears itself loose or damages the net. As the men disentangle the trapped animal, a youth stands by with a spear ready to make the kill. Even the smallest antelope, when trapped, can be dangerous. Although the hunt is vital to the food economy of the Mbuti, they take no pleasure in the kill. It is considered a crime to hunt or kill more game than is essential for sustenance.

411 [177] b. The main weapon of the archers, the bow and arrow, is for the net hunters only an incidental means of obtaining food. The net hunters prefer their own poisoned arrows with a fire-hardened tip (as used here) rather than the unpoisoned metal tips supplied and used by the villagers.

[1] /Plate 35 appears on page 303--Analyst/

[P. 302]

177

[For general information on culture contacts and acculturation processes between the Mbuti bands and the villagers, see the following pages in category 116: 8, 15-17, 22, 27-29, 33-38, 44-54, 56-80, 83-88, 108J, 108K, 109, 128, 143, 145, 150, 156-157, 177-178, 180, 201, 205, 214-215, 225-228, 229-231, 234-239, 243-244, 246, 251, 273, 281-283, 291-292, 294-300, 322-325, 331, 333-338.]

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[For additional information on Villager/Mbuti relationships in which interpersonal and/or kpara/kare (artificial kin) aspects predominate, see also 608, 571, 578.]

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● 177
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[Author's general discussions of his approach to the problem of Village/Mbuti relationship, in which there is little presentation of specific economic, social or cultural data on the relationship, will be found in category 121.]

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• 177
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[For additional information on the question of Villager influence on the Mbuti, and Villager/Mbuti cultural differences, see also Congo-Kinshasa FO1, categories 101, 241, 105, 628, 361.]

121 [128] tainty, then I cite supporting evidence; otherwise it may be taken that generalization for all net-hunters is considered valid. In point of fact there seem to be few differences of structural interest.

[184] Enough work was done among archer bands to get some idea of the extent and nature of the structural differences to be expected between them and the net-hunters, but again I must emphasize the considered need for further studies, one of which should include a detailed study of an archer band over a similar period and with similar intensity, and another of which should tackle the Mbuti/Villager relationship from the village point of view. Finally, there is need for detailed studies of the various local village tribes, at which point those who are interested may begin to sort out which elements of the present Mbuti culture may be considered as original, and which as borrowed.

121 105 The over-all picture is one of a society where the lack of formal structure is so evident that one wonders why there is not complete disintegration. There are not only no chiefs or councils of elders, but no ritual specialists, and no lineage system that in any way contributes directly to order and cohesion. There is no legal system, and no body of belief in supernatural sanctions. The secret begins to reveal itself when you look at the band one day, to see what it really *is*, and look at it the next day and find it is something else.

As suggested above, the constant state of flux that characterizes the Mbuti band may be in response to the attempts of the villager cultivators to assert a formal relationship with it. The lack of chiefs and the lack of priests and the lack of unilineal descent system certainly prevent the formation of political, ritual or domestic ties, and as stated elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) the economic relationship is [181] one of mutual convenience rather than of dependency. What emerges that seems to be of particular significance is the central theme of the forest, a theme that not only orders the hunting and gathering world of the Mbuti, but also divides them from the world of the villagers as if dividing the sacred from the profane.

121 177 18 If social flux is what prevents the formation of a relationship that would necessarily involve the subordination of the Mbuti to the villagers, the central value of the forest is what maintains internal stability and cohesion, at the same time determining the relationship of opposition with the outside world. This opposition in fact creates a kind of voluntary indigenous system of apartheid, where two peoples live side by side, exploiting the same environment in totally dif-

ferent ways, with totally different values, with only the minimum of 121
contact, and that based on nothing more than territorial propinquity 177
and mutual convenience. In this way each is able to extract some 18
benefit from the presence of the other without sacrificing its integrity, while maintaining a sense of absolute superiority that, however illusory in terms of economics or politics, is thoroughly justified by the opposition of the value systems.

The fact that this opposition does not erupt into open hostility 121
is due largely to the size of the forest, which can easily support the 177 *
two populations and the two economies. But the moment some element upsets the precarious balance, rendering one economy or the other ineffective, then collision will be inevitable; and insofar as it is the hunting and gathering way of life that is most likely to be affected, the onus of change will be upon the Mbuti, and they are the ones who, because of the intimate relationship they have with their forest environment, are the least fitted for change. The present study will indicate in some measure the extent to which the Mbuti society is capable of assimilation or adaptation, and the extent to which change can come to it only through subordination or extermination.

Considerable space is devoted to setting out a fairly straightfor- 128
ward ethnography of the Mbuti. This is considered essential because of the present paucity of information that can be used for the kind of analysis here envisaged. The details may seem unnecessarily minute at times, and there are certain total blanks, but the picture is given as fully as possible so that the closeness of the reliance of the Mbuti on their environment may be recognized. And insofar as the environment or territory is going to take precedence over political systems, instability over stability, music over sex and death, and mere age over kinship, it is felt that all the available evidence, however slight it may at first seem, is going to be needed.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

clearly defined, opening northward into a large central area unclaimed 133 [031] by anyone.

The topography of the Epulu territory is similar to that of most other bands, though without the steep, mountainous ridges that occur slightly further east. The ground is gently undulating, as thickly [137] forested on the hilltops as in the valleys, though the vegetation is much denser along the banks of streams and rivers. It is almost im- 133 possible to walk more than a few hundred yards without having to 484 cross a small stream, and after a particularly violent and prolonged rainfall there are areas that become temporarily flooded and the larger streams may become uncrossable torrents. But normally there is little difficulty in traveling from one extreme of the area to another. There are no swamps, the ground is clear of the tangled undergrowth that characterizes old plantation sites, and all but the largest streams are either shallow enough, in places, to be forded or are bridged at intervals by fallen trees. Nowhere do the Mbuti need to build bridges, [491] and nowhere do they do so except in the village context.[3] It is a simple fact that rivers that are too wide to be bridged by a fallen tree are relatively far and few between, and therefore form convenient natural boundaries. There is neither the desire nor the need to cross such rivers. A certain mistrust of large bodies of water strengthens the 133 efficacy of rivers as boundaries, just as the few superstitions to be 823 found among the Mbuti mostly relate to ravines, caves, streams or 133 hills that form other boundaries.

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for 000

[3] The famous "pygmy" bridge and the spectacular technique of crossing a river by [481] swinging on a vine from one side to the other were taught to the Mbuti, not without [177] difficulty, by an enterprising movie-maker. Patrick Putnam was asked to assist as interpreter, but refused. His first wife, however, went to watch the proceedings. The same group of pygmies retained some knowledge of the technique, and obligingly repeated the act for subsequent "documentary" film units. They are the only group with the knowledge, though they are now less proficient. A more recent movie-maker had to sling a wire hawser across the river and suspend the vine swing from its midpoint. A simple mathematical calculation will reveal the impossibility of the swinging technique, even disregarding the area behind the swing that would have to be cleared, a task in itself beyond Mbuti technology. Assuming the fulcrum is over one bank, and the branches into [illegible] assuming that the pygmy can be drawn back far enough to swing up to a 45-degree angle at the far end of his swing, the maximum width that can be crossed is three-quarters of the height of the swing. In practical experiment among the Mbuti, I found that effectively half the height of the swing was the maximum horizontal distance that could be so traversed. This would mean that to cross a river a mere hundred yards in width, the fulcrum would have to be some 600 feet up, demanding a tree approaching the height of the Eiffel Tower. Conversely, a swing of the maximum normally practicable length of 60 feet would enable a pygmy to span a stream a mere 30 feet across. Pygmies generally have rather more sense, in such matters, than movie-makers.

way to the forest. If the *elima* happens to be in a village camp, as it 881 sometimes is for part of its duration, the girls will still go away off 533 into the forest to sing their songs. The older men and women say that [177] • the festival should be held entirely in the forest, but the younger Mbuti point out that it is an occasion for rejoicing and feasting, and so it is much better to be near a village and eat off the villagers. Even when doing that, however, one is likely to come across broken saplings stuck in the ground alongside a trail many hours from the village camp, showing that the *bamelima* passed by there, "rejoicing the forest." Sometimes they may be heard in their peculiar antiphony with the forest, at other times the saplings appear swiftly and silently a few yards from an Mbuti youth as a sign that the *bamelima* are nearby and should not be disturbed. Sometimes youths, thinking they have left the *bamelima* safely in their hut in a village camp, are hours off in the forest in their usual boisterous, noisy way, and will find themselves attacked and chased by the girls, armed with sticks and whips.

Usually the girls are all together, but every now and then one of the 881 *elima* girls and her assistant will go off together into the forest, and stay there for half a day or more. At such times the others sit around looking dejected, and complain of being deserted. The older women then say that they should not complain, that it is good for the girl to go away sometimes and "converse with the forest."

As at birth, there is a certain amount of decoration of the body 881 with what might be considered as forest charms, and toward the end 778 of the festival the girls paint each other with a white forest clay. The [302] personification of the forest, and the frequency with which it is referred to, and the way in which this is done as though its personality were an ordinary matter of fact are another indication of the intense personal importance of the forest in the life of the Mbuti, of its character as a parent, a friend, and a lover, the provider of all things. But it cannot be interpreted as forest worship, for to the Mbuti it is simply a matter of fact.

One thing that is particularly interesting in consideration of the 881 [illegible] things. It does not deny individuality to the *elima* girl, who in fact is 571 constantly displaying it and often causing friction as a result, but it 866 effectively consolidates an age group that might otherwise have been 182 rather lacking in cohesion. Girl's activities are, on the whole, less co-operative in nature than those of boys, and whereas boys are clearly formed into co-operative groups before arriving at puberty, this is not

584 591 621 small it will wish a boy to stay or a girl to bring her husband to live with her. If the band is large, however, it will prefer to lose a member. If the marriage is within the band, and the band is large, the couple may still go to join another band, the choice of which being determined by size again, more than by any other consideration. The presence of friends or relatives and knowledge of the territory are important but secondary considerations. This question of residence falls primarily upon the hunters to decide; the elders have little to say.

DEATH

761 602 [177] In death, the final crisis of the life cycle, we again see a lack of emphasis on kinship, though once more perhaps we should bear in mind that the contact between the Mbuti and the villagers has undoubtedly affected not only kinship and ritual terminology, but also kinship relations and ritual practice. Be that as it may, in the present context, death is of immediate concern to both the nuclear family and the whole band. For the nuclear family, and for other members of the 761 152 family who have during their lives been close to the deceased person, it is an occasion for grief. This grief is freely expressed by young and old together and may at times become apparently uncontrollable. In the same way that the Mbuti are given to excessive bursts of laughter, often developing into near hysteria, so when they weep they do so with what amounts almost to violence. Children of the deceased, 761 763 152 without regard to age or sex, begin weeping the moment they hear the news of death, or as soon as a sick person indicates that he is not going to live much longer. If news of sickness or death reaches a relative some distance away, the relative will shout and yell rather than weep, and will continue this way until he reaches the camp where the sick person is dying. Immediately on entering the camp he will burst into tears, and wailing loudly will enter the hut and throw himself on the ground at the bedside of the dying person. Sometimes a close relative will slash himself with self-inflicted knife wounds, or by tying a halter around his neck and trying to strangle himself. Others pay little attention to these demonstrations of grief and I have never seen [687] any serious injury result. Elders look on, however, with some disapproval, and will intervene if there is any danger of such injury.

763 152 The rest of the adults in the band will sit around outside their huts, watching the wailers run in and out of the sick person's hut, and while they themselves are likely to be serious and upset they are also likely

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P
648 1. Band/Village: *capita*/Chief
439 2. Lineage/Lineage: Lineage elder/*Kpara*
121 3. Individual/Individual: *Karé*/*Karé*

We shall deal with each in turn to determine the formal nature of the relationship, and the degree to which it is effective.

P
Capita/Chief

621 The relationship of the band as a whole to the village as a whole
648 would be a simple and effective one if the band were, as the villagers
C 563 claim it should be, a unilineal entity based on the principle of patrilineal
648 descent. However, as we have seen, the band is generally composite,
and in any case its composition is constantly changing. Sheer
P C territorial propinquity, however, encourages a relationship of economic
[439] exchange between these two units, regardless of the composition
of either. Generally speaking there is no need for the village to relate to the band as a whole, food exchange being more easily effected at an interfamilial or interpersonal level. However, under the foreign economic pressures mentioned earlier, at certain times villages found it necessary to have the massed help of all the Mbuti they could
C muster. In such a case the village Chief summoned the Mbuti *capita*
[622] and made his wishes known. The *capita* relayed these wishes to the
P [622] band, which then did whatever it thought expedient, after general
discussion.

P
The *capita* seems to assume more importance as an institution in
648 the villages of the archer area, to the east of the Epulu. However,
554 even there the villagers themselves admit that the institution is foreign
622 to the Mbuti. I have not once heard it claimed otherwise, by
• [177] Mbuti or villagers. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, old
P men and women are accorded respect, but they have no authority and
[888] their area of influence is limited in accordance with their age, and
[184] does not include the village. Such elders, then, have no more say than
any other Mbuti concerning village matters pertaining to the band as a whole. But village affairs do not fall within the province of any age group, and the *capita* finds himself having to deal separately with each family, if indeed he takes that much trouble at all. Sometimes he may do so if a villager accompanies him to the camp in the hopes of adding strength to the village argument. I have seen this happen among the archers as among the net-hunters, in each case with a direct plea for all Mbuti to go to the village to help with the cotton harvest.

175 Reverend Paul Schebesta, set out from Vienna in the nineteen-twenties to study them.
114

114 Schebesta's first trip was an over-all survey of the forest area, in
144 which he established the fact that this was a stronghold of the pure Pygmy, as opposed to the "Pygmoid" in other parts of the equatorial belt, where there has been intermarriage with Negro tribes. In subsequent trips Schebesta gathered material which showed that these Ituri Pygmies—whose term for themselves, BaMbuti, he adopts—are in fact racially distinct from the Negro peoples, Bantu and Sudanic, who live around them. This fact has been confirmed by later
174 genetic studies, up to the present. Though we cannot be sure, it seems reasonable to assume that the BaMbuti were the original inhabitants of the great tropical rain forest stretching from the west coast right across to the open savanna country of the east, on the far side of the chain of lakes that divides the Congo from East Africa.

114 But when I read Schebesta's account of the Pygmies it just did not
533 ring true when compared with my own experiences on my first trip to the Ituri. For instance, in one of his first books he says that the Pygmies are not great musicians, but that they sing only the simplest melodies and beat on drums and dance wild erotic dances. Even much later, after he had come to know the Pygmies better and had spent several years in the region, when he wrote his major work, running to several volumes, he devoted only a few pages to music, attributing little importance to it and dismissing it as simple and undeveloped. This could not have been further from the truth.

114 In several other ways I felt that all [illegible]
177 account, particularly with his description of the relationship between Pygmies and Negroes. He gave the impression that the Pygmies were dependent on the Negroes both for food and for metal products and that there was an unbreakable hereditary relationship by which a Pygmy and all his progeny were handed down in a Negro family, from father to son, and bound to it in a form of serfdom, not only

hunting but also working on plantations, cutting wood and drawing 114
water. None of this was true of the Pygmies that I knew. But I did 177 •
agree with Schebesta about the *molimo* (a religious festival). Although
he had not seen it himself, from what he heard about it and
about similar practices among other groups of Pygmies, he felt sure
that it was essentially different from the practices of neighboring
Negroes, however similar they might appear to be on the surface.
This certainly tallied with my own experience.

The general picture that emerged from his studies was that there 114
were, living in the Ituri Forest, some 35,000 BaMbuti Pygmies, 101 177
divided into three linguistic groups, speaking dialects of three major [161]
Negro languages. The Pygmies seemed to have lost their own language, [174]
due to the process of acculturation though traces remained, [177]
especially in tonal pattern. Only in the easternmost group did Schebesta
feel that the language had survived to any recognizable extent. [184]
These were the Efe Pygmies who lived among the BaLese, an eastern
Sudanic tribe with a not very savory reputation for cannibalism,
witchcraft and sorcery.

But in spite of this linguistic difference, and the fact that the Efe 114
also differed in that they did not hunt with nets but with bow and 105
arrow and spear, Schebesta believed that all the BaMbuti were a [184] [411]
single cultural unit. They tended to live in small groups of from three
families upward, moving around the forest from camp to camp,
though always attached to some Negro village with which they
traded meat for plantation products. There was no form of chieftainship,
and no mechanism for maintaining law and order, and it was
difficult—from Schebesta's account—to see what prevented these
isolated groups from falling into complete chaos. The most powerful 114
unifying factor, it appeared, was the domination of the Pygmies by 105
the Negroes. Schebesta cited the *nkumbi* initiation as an example of 177
the way Negroes forced the BaMbuti to accept their authority and
that of their tribal lore. Remembering what I had seen, living in an

114 105 initiation camp, I could not accept this point of view at all. Yet it
• 177 was one shared by others, some of whom had lived in the area for
years.

114 177 The explanation was simple enough, and it was not that either one of us was right and the other wrong. Whereas Father Schebesta had always had to work through Negroes, and largely in Negro villages, I had been fortunate in being able to make direct contact with the Pygmies, and in fact had spent most of my time with them away from Negro influence. Other Europeans had also only seen the Pygmies either in Negro villages or on Negro plantations. But I had seen enough of them both in the forest and in the village to know that they were completely different people in the two sets of circumstances. All that we knew of them to date had been based on observations made either in the villages or in the presence of Negroes.

114 Whereas my first visit to the Ituri Forest, in 1951, had been made mainly out of curiosity, I had seen enough to make me want to return to this area for more intensive study. An ideal location was provided by a strange establishment set up on the banks of the Epulu River back in the nineteen-twenties by an American anthropologist, Patrick Putnam.* He had gone there to do his field work but had liked the place and the people so much that he decided to stay. He built himself a huge mud mansion, and gradually a village grew up around him and became known as "Camp Putnam." The Pygmies treated it just as they treated any other Bantu village (the main Negro tribes nearby were the BaBira and BaNdaka, with a few Moslem BaNgwana), and used to visit it to trade their meat for plantation products. This was where I first met them.

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* Patrick Putnam first went to the Belgian Congo in 1927 to do field work for Harvard University. Apart from one or two brief return visits to the United States he remained there until his death at the end of 1953. At Camp Putnam he established a dispensary and a leper colony, turning his home into a guest house to help pay the expenses of his hospital work.

114 177 881 But on my second visit, in 1954, I was provided with a real opportunity for studying the relationship between the Pygmies and their village neighbors. The event was the decision of the local Negro chief to hold a tribal nkumbi initiation festival. This is a festival in which all boys between the ages of about nine and twelve are circumcised, then set apart and kept in an initiation camp where they are taught the secrets of tribal lore, to emerge after two or three months with the privileges and responsibilities of adult status.

177 881 The nkumbi is a village custom, but in areas where the practice prevails the Pygmies always send their children to be initiated along with the Negro boys. This has been cited as an example of their dependence on the Negroes and of their lack of an indigenous culture. The Negroes take all the leading roles in the festival, and as no Pygmy belongs to the tribe, none can become a ritual specialist, so the Pygmy boys always have to depend on the Negroes for admission to an initiation, and for the subsequent instruction. An uninitiated male, Pygmy or Negro, young or old, is considered as a child—half a man at best.

Only relatives of the boys undergoing initiation are allowed to live in the camp, though any adult initiated male can visit the camp during the daytime.

But it so happened that on this occasion there were no Negro boys of the right age for initiation, so the only men who could live in the camp and stay there all night were Pygmies. To go against the custom of allowing just relatives to live in the camp would have [illegible] with the festival because it has to be held to avoid offending the tribal ancestors. The Negro men would have liked to stay in the camp all night, as normally instruction goes on even then, the boys being allowed to sleep only for short periods. But custom was too strong, and they had to rely on the Pygmy fathers to maintain order in the camp after dark and not allow the children to have too much sleep.

123 The Pygmies, however, did not feel bound by the custom, as it
• 177 was not theirs anyway, and they invited me to stay with them, know-
881 ing perfectly well that I would bring with me plenty of tobacco,
palm wine, and other luxuries. I was, after all, they said, father of
all the children, so I was entitled to stay. The Negroes protested,
but there was nothing they could do. On the one hand they felt that
I would be punished for my offense by their supernatural sanctions;
on the other they themselves hoped to profit by my presence. At
least I could be expected to share in the expenses, which otherwise
they would have to bear, of initiating the eight Pygmy boys.

And so I entered the camp and saw the initiation through from
beginning to end. It was not a particularly comfortable time, as
we got very little sleep. The Pygmy fathers were not in the least
interested in staying awake simply to keep their children awake and
teach them nonsensical songs, so the Negroes used to make periodic
raids during the night, shouting and yelling and lashing out with
whips made of thorny branches, to wake everyone up. Besides that,
352 the camp was not very well built and the heavy rains used to soak
the ground we slept on; only the boys, sleeping on their rough bed
made of split logs, were dry. In the end we all used to climb up
there and sit—there was not room for everyone to lie down—cold
and miserable, waiting for the dawn to bring another daily round
of exhausting singing and dancing.

123 But at the end of it all I knew something about the Pygmies, and
they knew something about me, and a bond had been made between
us by all the discomforts we had shared together as well as by all
the fun. And when the initiation was over and we were off in the
forest I learned still more. It was then that I knew for sure that much
of what had been written about the Pygmies to date gave just about
as false a picture as did the thirteenth-century cartographer who
181 painted them as one-legged troglodytes. In the village, or in the
177 presence of even a single Negro or European, the Pygmies behave

in one way. They are submissive, almost servile, and appear to have 181 no culture of their own. But at night in the initiation camp when 177 the last Negro had left, or off in the forest, those same Pygmies were different people. They cast off one way of life and took on another, and from the little I saw of their forest life it was as full and satisfactory as village life seemed empty and meaningless.

The Pygmies are no more perfect than any other people, and life, 123 though kind to them, is not without hardships. But there was some- 181 thing about the relationship between these simple, unaffected people and their forest home that was captivating. And when the time came that I had to leave, even though we were camped back near [533] the village, the Pygmies gathered around their fire on the eve of my departure and sang their forest songs for me; and for the first time I heard the voice of the molimo. Then I was sure that I could never rest until I had come out again, free of any obligations to stay in the village, free of any limitations of time, free simply to live and roam the forest with the BaMbuti, its people; and free to let them teach me in their own time what it was that made their life so different from that of other people.

The evening before I left, before the singing started, three of 123 the great hunters took me off into the forest. They said they wanted 304 to be sure that I would come back again, so they thought they would make me "of the forest." There was Njobo, the killer of elephants; [551] his close friend and distant relative, Kolongo; and Moke, an elderly Pygmy who never raised his voice and with respect. Kolongo held my head and Njobo casually took a rusty arrow blade and cut tiny but deep vertical slits in the center of my forehead and above each eye. He then gauged out a little flesh from each slit and asked Kolongo for the medicine to put in. But Kolongo had forgotten to bring it, so while I sat on a log, not feeling very bright, Kolongo ambled off to get the medicine, and Moke wandered around cheerfully humming to himself, looking for something to eat.

and its name changes to the Ituri. This is where the forest becomes 131
the home of the BaMbuti, all the way through to its easternmost 133
fringe, north as far as it is dense enough to cast its protective shade, and for unknown hundreds of miles to the south, where it is still unexplored. This was the home of the Pygmies thousands of years before Europeans thought of Africa itself as anything much more than a myth.

To be back was wonderful, but the changes at Camp Putnam 000
were so drastic that I wondered if I had done the right thing in returning. Now that Pat was dead the name of the district had been changed to Epulu, the name of the river that ran past his old home. And more than the name was changed. A few hundred yards on, past the turning to the old village of Camp Putnam, the road crossed the river by a rickety wooden bridge. The bridge was as rickety as ever, but the forest on either side had been cut down, and backing onto what had once been Pat's estate was an ugly modern motel, built by an enterprising Belgian who hoped to attract tourists. The main attraction was that on the other side of the road the government had established a *Station de Chasse* for the capture of forest animals, particularly okapi, and for the training of forest elephants. Between these two innovations down by the bridge and the old entrance to Camp Putnam stretched the mud houses of the workers, with a few tiny African stores and an establishment proudly calling itself Hotel de Bière. The village of Camp Putnam remained unaltered. Even the old mud mansion

Not only the changed appearance of Epulu was disconcerting; 171
so was the fact that this new community was attracting Pygmy labor, 464
particularly since Pygmies could be paid even less than other tribes. I found that several of my old friends were working either at the Animal Station or the motel, buying their food with money at the local stores, instead of freely roaming the forest hunting and gathering for their needs. One of them, a youth called Kenge, had

One of them, a youth called Kenge, had
115 even become bugler at the Animal Station, where almost every hour
177 the air was shattered with attempts at military bugle calls.

464 Kenge's father had died a number of years ago, when he was just
[559] a boy. His mother had returned to her village, but Kenge had stayed around Camp Putnam. Pat Putnam encouraged him to become a jack-of-all-trades, and Kenge had come to spend more time at the camp than in the forest. He even learned the work of hotel boy, such as pressing clothes for Putnam's guests. He wore shorts and shirt, meticulously scrubbed and pressed with the Camp Putnam flatiron, but usually without buttons. He was very sophisticated and a little conceited, but a good friend to me at all times, and eventually he made himself indispensable.

115 During my last trip Kenge had been with me practically the whole
123 time; since no women were allowed in the initiation camp, he helped with the cooking, and he had told me how to behave. He tried to interpret my questions to the others, for he had a better idea than most Pygmies of the peculiar sorts of things that Europeans want to know. Such things to an African are often forbidden topics of conversation and even to mention them would be grossly indiscreet or even insulting. Kenge became so familiar with the kind of questions I liked to ask that he would even conduct inquiries in my absence, then tell me what he had discovered about so-and-so's mother's brother's daughter. But for all his sophistication, what he liked best was to take me through the forest, as though he owned it personally, show-

He had insisted on working for me, and I had fired him regularly every two or three weeks, because, sophisticated or not, he was as unpredictable as any Pygmy, and just as disinclined to do anything he did not want to do. Several times he announced that he was going to get food for my supper, and I would give him the money to buy something special in the village. Of course he would go straight to the beer house and leave me to scrounge what I could. I soon learned

31 Turnbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

115 123 Pygmy and said he didn't mind. He suggested 40 francs per week, a wage considerably below what he had been earning as a bugler. He said that if I could afford a present when I left, that would be fine. Pygmies have a way of letting you know when they really mean what they say, and this was one of those times. In all the many months that followed, Kenge never once asked me for money, beyond his meager salary. And once when I was short of cash and we were down in the village he spent his own savings to buy food for the two of us.

123 In the course of my two previous trips I had come to know most of the Pygmies in this area quite well, and the initiation had cemented our friendship, though at the best I suspect they regarded me merely as a rather harmless outsider. I was soon brought up to date on all
177 that happened during the past three years. Kenge said that the hunt-
[464] ing group was still hunting and gathering, but that they sometimes
[434] came down to the village and spent time there, earning money at the Station de Chasse or at the motel, money which they promptly spent on food, tobacco, and palm wine at the new stores. They still brought in meat for their *BaKpara*, or "masters," and took plantation
177 foods in return. But, encouraged by the administration, they had
241 begun to make their own plantation in the forest. This was the worst possible news; once the Pygmies have plantations their hunting-and-gathering existence is made impossible. They become tied to one place and do not have time to follow the game.

[illegible] who had the finest clearings were Njobo and Masisi. They were two of the most
[591] influential hunters of the group. Njobo had killed two elephants
[276] single-handed, and two more in company with other Pygmies. He had three wives, but had only one child, a son by his second wife. The son, Nyange, had been a healthy lad when I had last seen him, but now he was crippled with tuberculosis of the leg bone.

156 Masisi was a relative of Njobo's, and though not such a renowned

156 usually are. Both Manyalibo and his wife were great humorists, and
[522] they made use of the powers of ridicule to break up some of the
[626] more serious disputes, because there is nothing that upsets a Pygmy
more than being laughed at.

[551] The oldest member of the group, a member of the same family
though even more distantly related, was old Tungana, who had so
many children and grandchildren that neither he nor his wife could
156 remember all their names. Strangely enough, he was a progressive
[illegible] Pygmy, and whereas Manyalibo was constantly decrying the Pygmy
888 plantation in his deep bass voice, Tungana thought it was fine. He
also thought living near the village was a good thing as there was
so much good food to be had for the stealing. And wasn't stealing
easier than hunting? I think the truth was that poor old Tungana was
getting too old to follow the hunting band with ease, and he was
afraid of being abandoned. In fact, he often remained behind in the
village when the rest were far off in the forest, and one of his many
sons would come in every few days bringing the old couple gifts of
meat and forest fruits.

[551] Moke was another of the elders. He claimed a fictional relation-
[608] ship with Tungana because it made him feel at home, since he had
no real relatives in the group other than his own children. Moke was
the greatest traditionalist of all, and when the Pygmy plantations
were mentioned in front of him he just laughed dryly to himself
and smiled his toothless smile, saying he had not tasted any Pygmy
bananas yet, but if any grew then he would be glad to eat them.
156 It was Moke who had come with Kolongo and Njobo to cut the
marks on my forehead three years earlier. Kolongo had been as much
of a traditionalist as Moke, as indeed were all his family, particularly
the wizened old mother, Balekimito, and his oldest sister, Asofalinda,
who was now a widow and thoroughly enjoying her freedom. Moke
had thought of her as a companion for his old age, but Asofalinda
liked life as it was, so Moke was still a widower and she a widow.

115 group, as often happens. But Kenge was his son by another wife,
602 from a totally unrelated group. By Njobo's sister his father had one
daughter, and she was Kenge's only real blood relative in the whole
[832] group. This was important, as it enabled him to flirt with almost
any of the other girls, with the added spice of its being thought
incestuous, because they belonged to his group even though they
were totally unrelated.

361 Since I had been with them before, the group had changed
177 slightly, with a few additions and subtractions. At their suggestion
[123] I decided to build my own house in their village camp. It looked as
[122] if we were in for a long spell in the village. The camp was in a
strategic position between the village of the workers of the motel
and Station de Chasse and that of Camp Putnam, near the stores
and the beer house, and—even more important—near all the surrounding
plantations. Progressive old Tungana said that it was a
good site because tourists could drive close by and take their photographs
and give them money. Manyalibo, in his dry way, said the
only good thing about it was that it was close to the plantations so
he didn't have to go far to steal his food. The youngsters liked it
because it was near the houses of Negro villagers, where they could
go begging for cigarettes, old clothes, and palm wine.

177 It looked, in fact, as if these Pygmies had become as professional
as those that line the roadside at Beni, on the edge of the forest, selling
their services to tourists, letting themselves be photographed
doing things they would never do in the forest, wearing clothes they
wouldn't wear except in a village, even selling the tourist weapons
177 used only by Negroes. But Moke reassured me. His face wrinkled
166 up in smiles, and in his soft, toothless voice he told me not to worry,
that we would all be back in the forest long before my house was
[829] finished. "That is where we belong," he said, "and we shall return
soon. We cannot refuse the forest." He was right, but it was in

circumstances he could not have foreseen or he would not have been 122 so cheerful.

For the first few days I went out with Kenge and others to the 313 new "Pygmy plantation," to collect the poles and saplings for my [123] house. The plantation was a chaotic tangle of fallen, broken, splintered wood. The Pygmies, armed only with their small honey axes, [412] and a few bigger blades borrowed or stolen from the Negroes, had chopped the smaller trees down at about shoulder height, or rather less. The bigger trees they had attacked higher up, working from a flimsy frame from which they gnawed with their tiny hatchets like rats until a hundred and fifty feet of timber came crashing down. They had evidently caught on to the idea that if they attacked the big trees first, those, as they fell, would bring down a number of smaller ones, saving that much work. The result was that even they found it difficult to pick their way among the debris, and they had no means of clearing it. None the less, they had hopefully thrown 313 down banana stems here and there, hoping for them to take root. 245 Njobo proudly showed me one he had "planted," which was struggling manfully to raise its withered leaves above the debris into the sunshine. The only clearing had been done by Negroes, like myself in search of building materials. Evidently the Pygmies' enthusiasm for their plantation had not carried them very far.

The building of my house followed much the same pattern that 342 characterizes every Pygmy endeavor outside the forest world. It began with a lot of noise and big ideas. Their own camp was built in the [361] manner of a Negro village, mud huts in two lines facing each other. The huts were only about seven feet long and five feet deep, some without roofs, some without walls, none of them really complete. Larger families joined two houses together. Only Ekianga's was different, 342 as might be expected. His house stood at the far end and ran 184 across between the two lines, facing down the middle. It was about twenty feet long and had a fine wooden door that opened and

763

761 152 578 of him. She pointed her skinny hand at him, flinging her arm backward and forward with every step, rhythmically enumerating all the reasons why he should keep his mouth shut. He was a great one at complaining about other people being trouble-makers, but he made more noise than anyone. Besides, one should never say that anyone had died completely unless they had died for ever.

Madyadya, Manyalibo's adopted son, lazily wandered in between them and spitting on the ground said that Asofalinda made a pretty good noise herself. Old Moke laughed noiselessly. Asofalinda strode back to her house and slammed the fine wooden door; Mambutu continued to grumble to himself for a few minutes, and Masisi asked who was going to give him some tobacco.

761 763 753 It seemed that the girl was very ill with dysentery but was not yet dead. The Pygmies express various degrees of illness by saying that someone is hot, with fever, ill, dead, completely or absolutely dead, and, finally, dead for ever.

763 152 Unhappily, early the next morning loud wailing from Cephu's camp, a quarter of a mile away, told us that the little girl was now dead for ever. When someone is ill the women relatives will wail, but it is a formal act, perhaps copied from the Negroes for whom it is an obligation. But when someone really dies, for ever, there is among the Pygmies a burst of uncontrollable grief, not only from relatives, but from friends. Even men will weep if they have been close to the dead person. It is a very different sound, and a terrible one, and that is what we heard shortly after dawn.

764 [123] [177] The funeral took place the same day, directed by the Negroes. I helped with the digging of the grave, but Kenge, Kelemoke, Amabosu, and Masisi's eldest son Agorunga were the chief diggers. The Negroes lent the tools and stood there, giving instructions, and they became impatient and angry when we stopped and climbed out of the grave for a smoke. The young Pygmies laughed and joked, and

P 764 Kelemoke, although he was a close relative of the girl's, was in particularly good humor.

P 764 177 Meanwhile the body had been bathed, scented, wrapped in a white cloth, tied up in a mat and placed on a rough wooden bier. This was strictly according to Negro custom. In the forest the Pygmies would have been unable to get the soap and scent and cloth, for one thing, and would not have had the tools to dig an elaborate grave, for another. The bier was brought to the graveyard, which lay behind the village, in a noisy, wailing procession of Pygmies and Negroes. The body was carefully lowered into the grave. Rather grotesquely they made sure which end was which by grasping the head and twisting it under its covering. The body was oriented, laid on its side in a niche that had been cut under one wall of the grave, and held in place with three stones. Sticks were placed at an angle over it, and these were covered with leaves, then with moist earth, so that no soil should fall on the body. Then the grave was filled, some people throwing in a handful of earth, others just standing and watching. The mother and older sister tried to throw themselves into the half-filled grave and had to be dragged away. Cephu was weeping so bitterly that he had to be supported. C [764] [152] Among the Negroes there is a strict ruling about funeral protocol—who is allowed to wail and who is not, who is allowed to support the chief mourner, a purely formal gesture, and so on. But this funeral followed no such rules. Whenever it made no difference to them the Pygmies followed the Negro custom, but the moment they wanted to go their own way they did.

P 764 199 Before the grave was completely covered the women left. The Negroes directed the operation of guiding the spirit safely away by pouring a bucket of water, C 764 775 first into a hole left in the earth above the head of the corpse, then down the grave and off in the direction of the forest, away from the village. To the Negroes the forest is the place for spirits of the dead; they must be kept away from the village at all costs.

000 village at all costs. Rather to my surprise this struck the Pygmies as
P
764 being funny, and they began sniggering. Kenge, carefully dusting
• 177 the last specks of earth from his spotless shorts, pretended to be
522 severe and said this was no time for laughter. He then promptly cracked a joke at the expense of the Negroes and joined his friends
P in howls of mirth. When Pygmies laugh it is hard not to be
[201] affected; they hold onto one another as if for support, slap their sides, snap their fingers, and go through all manner of physical contortions. If something strikes them as particularly funny they will even roll on the ground, but this time the disapproving looks they got from the Negroes discouraged them.

C The Negroes, having restored order, went on to the business of
761 settling who was responsible for the death of the child. To them no
764 death is natural; some evil spirit, some witch or sorcerer, had cursed the girl with dysentery and made her die. They tried to find out who had been fighting in Cephu's camp, who were the enemies of the girl's family. Their concern was a real one, for if the witch was
P not found, it might strike at them next. But the Pygmies were not
[761] co-operative. They were bored and listless. The girl had died and
[177] that was that. The Negroes finally gave up and we all returned, washing from head to foot as we crossed over the Nepussi.

P Back in the main camp everything was normal. Only in Cephu's
765 little camp was there quiet, subdued wailing from the house of the child's parents. There was some discussion as to whether or not the molimo should be called out. Cephu said in an aggressive manner that it should be, the only trouble being that he didn't have one. Certain families own them; others do not but when in need can borrow them from relatives. Cephu promptly called on Njobo, who reluctantly agreed.

That night, after the evening meal, a small number of men from the main camp went over to Cephu's camp and sat down around the central fire. The women and children were in their huts; some

talking, some sleeping, some sobbing softly. The men started singing, 765
and after a while I heard their song echoed from far off in the
forest and recognized the wistful sound, hollow and ghostly, answering
the men with snatches of their own song, sometimes singing
its own variations, sometimes breaking off into low, growling, animal
noises. The men continued singing as though nothing were happening,
and I heard the molimo coming closer, circling around the
camp. The women were all quiet in their huts now, and the fire had
burned low; the camp was pitch dark except for an occasional glow
where the ashes of some family hearth still glowed faintly outside a
hut. Even near a village, Cephu never built huts in imitation of the [342]
Negroes, and his camp was a typical forest camp, a close little circle [177] •
of small conical huts, made of a framework of saplings covered entirely [361]
with leaves.

The molimo was silent for a few minutes and I looked at the faces
of the men around our fire, which was flickering faintly in the middle
of the camp. They were all staring at the flames, their eyes wide
open but seeing things I had never seen. Only Cephu was lying back
in his chair, and he seemed to be asleep. There was a slight movement
beside me and I heard the molimo almost in my ear. The 765
sound was gentler and a little sad; it was now singing closely with 534
the men, as if answering their song. Amabosu had joined the group 533
and was on my left, and I saw that he had his hands up to his mouth.
Then in the shadows I saw that he was singing into what looked
like a long length of bamboo, a sort of trumpet, which was producing
that eerie, hollow sound. After a few minutes he stood up. One
of Tungana's sons also stood up, and I could see that he was holding
the other end of the trumpet. The two danced around the fire, waving
the bamboo tube over the flames, Amabosu singing into it all
the time and the men's chorus growing louder and louder. Then the
two performers dashed suddenly away into the forest behind the
camp, and after a few leopardlike growls the trumpet was heard no

765 533 [534] more. The men continued singing for about another hour, but as by then Cephu and the rest of his family had gone inside their huts, they stopped abruptly and returned to the main camp.

The next evening the singing was around a fire in the middle of the main camp. After all, the molimo was Njobo's, and Cephu just went to sleep, so why should we go to his camp? A few men from Cephu's family came over, but not Cephu. The singing went on for about four hours, but the molimo did not appear again. The third night it was the same, except that nobody turned up from Cephu's camp.

[858] I thought this a little strange and asked Moke about it. He said that normally one would not call out the molimo for a child; that was why nobody was really enthusiastic, but Cephu had insisted. Besides, the molimo should only be in the forest, not so close to a Negro village. It was all right to sing molimo songs as long as there were no Negroes about, but even then it was not good to sing them [794] near a village. The molimo itself, however, should come out only in the forest, where it belonged, and there was a lot of work attached, as it had to be given food to eat, water to drink, and fire to keep it warm. He stopped there and could not be persuaded to go any further. He just waved his hands in the air and said emphatically that this molimo was empty, meaningless, a farce.

765 177 186 At the end of a week the mourning period prescribed by the Negroes was over; the women, who were meant to wail at sunrise, noon and sunset, stopped wailing. A relative of Cephu's Negro "master" had come over to the village the night before, and the men had had a final burst of singing for him, but with their tongues in their cheeks. Moke told me not to think that this was a real molimo; it was what they did for the villagers to make them think their molimo was the same as the Pygmies'. The villagers also make use of a musical instrument called the *molimo*, but it is meant to represent the

voice of the clan totem, and it makes only animal sounds—it does not sing. 765 177 186

To end the period of mourning there had to be a feast, a great deal of the food being supplied by the Bantu. I felt that this was really why the Pygmies went through with the Negro funeral ceremony. Everyone was in high spirits. Even Cephu and his group joined the festivities, glad that there was no longer any need for the women to wail, constantly reminding them of a death they would rather forget. It is better to forget the dead quickly, the Pygmies [761] said, instead of making yourself remember them all the time, as the villagers do. When referring to the Bantu in this way, disparaging them or their customs, they used one of two terms, one meaning "animal," the other "savage"; the Negroes used the same terms about the Pygmies, and there was no great feeling of mutual respect.

At the height of the festivity there was a sudden cry from the 763 roadside, swelling into a burst of wailing that was infinitely more terrible than anything I had heard before. It was certainly worse than when Cephu's poor little girl had died for ever. Then old Balekimito, the much-loved mother of Ekianga and his dead brother Kolongo and of starchy old Asofalinda, was carried into the camp. She had been ill for some time, but as she was an old woman nobody had thought much of it. She had been ill before and not died completely, not even just died. But now she had died completely and absolutely, and her great hulking son, the great hunter, the man of substance with three wives, hairy, ugly Ekianga, was running up and down, his face streaked with tears, beating himself on the head with his fists and crying that his mother was going to die for ever.

Balekimito was carried gently over to her son's house, through the wooden door, and laid on the floor just inside. I went in to see her. The poor old woman was so thin I could see every bone in her weak, tired body; yet when I had last seen her she had been fine, upright, strong, and a powerful old matriarch if ever there was one.

763 She looked up at me with eyes that already had a bluish film over them and caught hold of my hand. She said she wanted to die near her son and was glad to be back again. She agreed to take some white
[157] man's medicine, and the dispenser from the Station de Chasse was
[177] sent for. This was quite a departure, as this family had always resisted more strongly than any the use of modern medicine.

Ekianga was almost beside himself. Gray-haired Asofalinda, no longer stiff and rough, but full of kindness, tried to comfort her younger brother, but she was too full of grief herself. She knelt on the ground beside her mother and wept. The old lady was the only one who seemed fully in control of herself, though the room was filled with wailing men, women and children. When the dispenser came she flickered to life with a burst of her old flame and slapped feebly at him with a bony hand as he pulled gently at her bark cloth to give her an injection, telling him to mind what he was doing. I felt her wince as the needle went in, but she continued looking up and smiling her old sweet smile. She was among her relatives and her friends, and that was all she wanted; she knew the injection would do no good. She held onto me so tightly that I couldn't leave until she finally dozed off; then when her grasp relaxed I quietly left and went out into the sunlight. Everyone was sitting around morosely, almost angrily. Even the little children, whom I had seen playing contentedly through other funerals, were quiet, holding onto their mothers in a frightened way. Everyone was watching Ekianga's fine wooden door, waiting for the end, waiting for old Balekimito to die for ever.

It was only a matter of hours. She never woke up.

The demonstration of grief that followed was no mere formal expression ordained by custom; it was something very real and disturbing. I have seen death in a Negro village where the atmosphere was one of fear—fear of sorcery, of the power of evil that had been unleashed. Here it was quite different. It was not a feeling of

village, brandishing one hand above his head, telling everyone to 763
stop making such a dreadful noise, that it was not doing any good
to anybody. "Crying is a matter for the immediate family," he said. [152]
"She was a mother to us all, but for all of us to cry is just too much noise." He clutched his head to illustrate the point, then grabbed a couple of children, one of them his own, and sent them flying. By now his temper was no longer artificial, and the women decided it was wiser to keep out of his way, and left.

As soon as the wailing stopped and the door to Ekianga's house
was closed, with only the family inside, the cloud of depression lifted.
Everyone started talking about the imminent return to the forest— [166]
about where they would go to hunt, where they would go for mushrooms and for fruit and nuts and honey, and where they should make their first camp. All agreed that it should be far away—but not so far that old Tungana could not come.

That night there was a little wailing from Ekianga's house, and a few women both in the main camp and in Cephu's camp were crying to themselves. Every now and then Masisi's sharp voice was raised, telling them all to go to sleep.

The funeral took place the following morning, again conducted 765
by the Negroes. Balekimito was buried next to Cephu's daughter, 177
and once again, when the grave had been filled in and the women [764]
had left, the Negroes tried to conduct a council to discover who had been responsible for the death. But the Pygmies were in no mood to play games. They simply walked off after the women, washed themselves perfunctorily in the Nepussi and returned to the camp to start preparations for going back to the forest.

After all, if Balekimito had died she had died well, and there
was a lot to *do*—plantations to raid and food to steal. This was no [186]
time to fool around with Negro notions of witchcraft and sorcery; this was a time to get back to the forest as quickly as possible and to hold the biggest molimo festival the forest had ever seen, to make the forest happy again.

484 other wives, and they left without saying a word to him. As Kamai-
595 kan squatted over the fire, fanning it until it glowed red, I saw that
she was pregnant, and I gathered from the look she cast after her
two co-wives that her condition was the cause of some jealousy in
the household.

115 Kenge delayed leaving, finding one excuse after another, until the
482 sun was up. He then admitted that he had thought it silly to leave
484 so early, when the forest was still wet and cold. He disappeared for
[513] an hour after that, and when he returned he was carrying a sleeping
• [197] mat he had scrounged from a Negro (Pygmies generally sleep on
leaves or sticks), a large bunch of plantains, and a cake of scented
soap. He decided he could not carry my bundle as well as these
things, so he told me I would have to carry my own. Anyway, he
[224] said, he wanted to leave his hands as free as possible in case he saw
a bird or monkey he could shoot for dinner. He pulled the string
of his bow and let it go with a loud twang, shooting an arm out in
the direction the arrow would have gone, pointing to a tree top
where a black-and-white Colobus monkey, idly scratching its stomach,
[186] gazed down at the scene below. I heard later that Kenge considered
himself above acting as a porter; he apparently thought of that as a
job fit only for people of the village, not people of the forest. Any
self-respecting Pygmy carries his own load and no one else's.

484 When the sun was above the trees and the birds were singing and
114 the village half empty, we crossed the road and walked through the
[273] Negro settlement, stopping for a quick last drink of palm wine,
for no such luxuries are to be had in the forest. There were six of us
in all: five Pygmy youths and myself.

The palm wine finished, they set off through the Negro planta-
[481] tions at such a pace that I almost had to run to keep up. At the edge
of the plantations the forest was thick and matted, and the path
entering it was narrow. The ground was still rough where saplings
had been hacked off just above ground level, and on either side was

Makubasi wandered about aimlessly, poking here and there from habit to see if there was any tasty fruit to be had for the picking, but it was too dark to see. 765 182

Just as I was about to ask where the others had gone they reappeared, announcing their presence with low whistles that sounded like the call of a night bird. 765 534 They were in two pairs, each pair carrying between them, over their shoulders, a long slender object. Even at that moment I wondered if they would veer off into the complete blackness of the forest before I could see more closely, but they came on toward us. Madyadya was carrying the rear end of what proved to be a huge tube of some kind, fifteen feet long. He gestured proudly and said, "See, this is our molimo!" Then he turned and putting his mouth to the end of the trumpet, which it was, he blew a long, raucous raspberry. [533] [522] Everyone doubled up with laughter, the first sound they had made since leaving camp.

I was slightly put out by this sacrilege and was about to blame it rather pompously on irreligious youth, when I saw something that upset me even more. 765 534 123 177 I do not know exactly what I had expected, but I knew a little about molimo trumpets and that they were sometimes made out of bamboo. I suppose I had expected an object elaborately carved, decorated with patterns full of ritual significance and symbolism, something sacred, to be revered, the very sight or touch of which might be thought of as dangerous. I felt that I had a right, in the heart of the tropical rain forest, to expect something wonderful and exotic. But now I saw that the instrument which produced such a surprisingly rude sound, shattering the stillness as it shattered my illusions, was not made of bamboo or wood, and it certainly was not carved or decorated in any way. It was a length of metal drainpipe, neatly threaded at each end, though somewhat bent in the middle. The second trumpet was just the same, shining and sanitary, but only half the length.

Everyone was looking at me to see what my reactions would be.

765 534 123 177 I asked, keeping my voice low, how it was that for the molimo, which was so sacred to them, they should use water piping stolen from roadside construction gangs, instead of using the traditional materials.

Evidently now that they had the trumpets in their possession there was no longer any need for silence, for they answered calmly and loudly with a counter-question. "What does it matter what the molimo is made of? This one makes a great sound, and, besides, it [322] does not rot like wood. It is much trouble to make a wooden one, and then it rots away and you have to make another."

[825] [533] Asumu, to prove how well it sounded, took the end of the longer pipe, which evidently belonged to Manyalibo, and all of a sudden the forest was filled with the sound of trumpeting elephants. The others clapped their hands with pleasure and said, "You see? Doesn't it sound well?"

My conservative feelings were still wounded, however, and it gave me some pleasure to see the difficulty the Pygmies had on the way back, carrying a fifteen-foot length of drainpipe through the forest. It was pitch dark now, though the moon was full, yet we still followed only the smallest animal trails, this being the quickest route. Frequently Madyadya, carrying the front end of his foster-father's trumpet, turned too sharply, following the trail, so that whoever was carrying the rear end was forced off the path and the trumpet became jammed between two trees. But in spite of these mishaps we returned almost as quickly as we had come.

When we came to the first stream we all stopped. The moonlight was just strong enough for me to see both trumpets laid carefully in the water, then lifted up so that the water ran through from end to end. "The molimo likes to drink," I was told. We washed our feet and continued, but at every stream we came to the performance was repeated, both trumpets being immersed and allowed to "drink." Every now and again, whoever was at the rear end of a trumpet

managed to find enough breath to blow a long blast that was some- 765
times musical, but more often not. The younger Pygmies all seemed 534
anxious to have a turn, but Auru, who was the only one who really 123
knew how to play, kept aloof. He ran ahead of us all, silently, into 177 •
the night.

It was so dark along the trails that I had to run barely two feet 765
behind whoever was in front, occasionally reaching out and touching 123
him to make sure he was still there. I had learned to lift my feet 421
high to avoid roots, but I did not know the trails inch by inch, as the Pygmies did, and once I put my foot in an animal hole and fell. But nobody stopped, and I had to run all the faster to catch up.

Only at the streams was there enough light for us to see each other 765
dimly; and at each stream I looked at those two drainpipes being 534
lovingly washed and fed with water. I was curious as to how far this 123
was a ritual act, and how far it was originally a practical measure that [322]
would make a wooden trumpet swell, closing any possible cracks, so that it would sound better. Auru said that of course that was why they did it, they did the same thing to all their wooden whistles and flutes as well; it made their voices stronger. Then he added casually, "We know it makes no difference to the sound of the metal trumpet, but we do it anyway."

When we reached the top of the hill that descends, gently at first, then steeply, into the Lelo River, we all halted and stood in the glade. It was lit with silvery patches of light, shining here and there uncertainly, where the moonlight found its way down through the rustling trees. Even the darker shadows glowed every now and then, but with a strange natural luminosity that came from the mushroom-shaped nests of the termites. We could hear the Lelo swishing below, and on the far side of the river voices from the camp floated lazily across to us, as though we were gods and they were mortals, infinitely far away.

We stood there for a moment. Then Auru took the end of the 765 534

224 some convenient branch or tree stump. Sometimes, when hunting, nets have to be set up rapidly, and anyone whose net has become tangled through poor preparation and coiling can spoil the chances of all the others.

224 462 [486] [251] [792] The women have little to do by way of preparation for the hunt, other than making sure of the strength of the bark tump line by which they carry their baskets. They put some food in these in case the day's hunt is a long one, and they wrap a glowing ember from the family fire in large, damp leaves, and sit down and wait for the men to set off.

In normal times there is often a dance before everyone departs for the hunt. Men and women circle the camp, singing a hunting song, looking from right to left, clapping their hands and leaping extravagantly in imitation of the animals they hope to catch. But this was rare during the days of the molimo as all felt the lack of rest.

224 825 [237] Another form of hunting magic, if you can call it that, was a paste made from various parts of an antelope, particularly the heart and the eye. The charred flesh is mixed with spittle and ground to a paste, then put in an inverted antelope horn and stuck in the ground near the family fire. Just before going on the hunt, members of the family smear one another with some of the paste, using a twig to dig it out of the horn. It is difficult to say whether this form of [779] magic is of Pygmy or Negro origin. I rather think the latter, because only a few families practiced it, and they were highly criticized by the others as being antisocial. They were trying to get success for 224 777 themselves at the expense of the others. On one such occasion a family had a long run of good luck, the animals always falling into their net, while others had no luck at all. It was decided that this must have been due to *anjo*, as the medicine was called, so everyone, including the offenders, agreed that the only thing to do was to destroy the horns that held the medicine. Everyone who had such a magic horn gave it to old Moke and promised not to make any more

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[202] go between the camp and the hunt, if they are not too far apart, bringing news to and fro.

As soon as the hunters return they deposit the meat on the ground, and the camp gathers to make sure the division is fair. Nobody acknowledges that it is, but in the end everyone is satisfied. Cooking operations start at once and within an hour everyone is eating. If the [535] hunt has been a good one, and the day is still young, the most energetic men and women dance immediately afterward, followed by the children. In the course of such a dance they imitate, with suitable exaggeration, the events of the day. If the hunt has not been so good, or a man is tired and does not feel like dancing, he will sit down and gather his family around him and tell them something that has happened to him on the hunt, something wonderful and exciting, but which naturally happened while nobody else was looking.

538 Since Pygmies are blessed with a lively imagination, these stories [159] grow until it is difficult to tell the difference between what is meant to be a straight, factual account and a traditional legend. And there is always the element of the two-way process in which fact becomes legend, and legend becomes accepted, through constant repetition, as fact.

The dream world of the Pygmies is a very real one, full of hidden meaning and significance. There is one story that Cephu is still fond of telling, and he still tells it in almost exactly the same way as he did six years earlier when I first heard it.

538 He had been into the village for a short visit, and we all knew he
439 had gone empty-handed. Yet when he returned a few days later he
• 177 brought a sizable load of plantains and rice with him. Everyone asked him who he had stolen it from. Cephu, with a great smile spreading across his face, sat down and waited for his audience to settle down. With his wife and his children close behind him, and his friends all around, Cephu sat simply on the ground in his most charming and bewitching way, old rascal that he was, even then. He looked up

at the trees and opened his arms and raised his expressive hands 538
upward. He began telling the story in his beautiful rich voice, the 437
seriousness of what he was saying belied only by the smile that lurked 177
in the depths of his shining brown eyes.

"I am only a poor BaMbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my Negro master had asked me to bring him some meat." So Cephu started, self-deprecating, using the term for his patron in the sense in which only the Negroes use it, as indicating ownership. The Pygmies accept this assumption of superiority outwardly, because it pays—as the story went on to show.

"My master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and [224]
I hunted, and I caught sondu and lendu and mboloko and sindula, [251]
and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were
nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh mongongo leaves and put
it all in my basket and set off for the village. But on the way I saw 538
a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up 439
with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. 177
I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this 776
meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be
put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape,
because I am strong and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the
village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They [186]
would kill any villager; only we Pygmies can deal with them. But
then I saw the spirit again and this time he was more clever than I,
and he changed into my grandmother. 'A'i, Cephu! Where are you
going with all that meat?' she asked me. Now my grandmother died [769]
many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking
it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking
if I would refuse it to her, a Pygmy, my own grandmother, and bring
it to a villager? I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how
good my master always was to me, and how hungry he was for meat.
But she snatched the basket from me, and because she was my

538 539 177 776 grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down the trail.

"As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knows what dreadful lives we BaMbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits. [186] He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Pygmy, you have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just a Pygmy and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.'

"So he gave me rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their poor Pygmies!"

[186] Every time Cephu tells this story it brings knowing smiles to the faces of all who listen, because every "poor Pygmy" has some trick such as Cephu's, by which he twists his "master" around his little finger and at the same time heightens the fear of the villagers for the forest by constantly repeating stories of imaginary spirits and dread dangers.

538 177 This story, as often happened, set off another. Old Asofalinda, Ekianga's sister, was not to be outdone. She described how she had cut down a fine stalk of plantains outside the village but was surprised in the act by the owner. She just had time to push the plantains into a hole in the ground at the foot of the tree. The villager asked what she was doing there, and what she was putting in the [776] hole. "Oh, master," she replied, "there was a dreadful dangerous

spirit-animal and he was going to attack you so I drove him into the hole and I dare not leave it or he will come out and kill you! Run and get your spear and save me, your poor Pygmy!" The villager was scared out of his wits and ran away. Asofalinda promptly hid the plantains elsewhere and quickly returned to the hole. 538 536 776 177

At this point in the story, Masamba, Njobo's wife, came to help act out the rest. Asofalinda crouched at the foot of a tree, pretending that she was covering a hole in the ground, and Masamba, acting the part of the villager, crept onto the scene, carrying a spear and looking very frightened. As they acted the scene, the villager came up behind Asofalinda and asked timidly if the spirit-animal was still there. "Yes," said Asofalinda, over her shoulder. "But I have used my magic and sung it to sleep so that you will be able to kill it. But you must be very quiet and very careful. You are the only one who could do it, you are so big and strong and clever, not like we poor Pygmies." 538 536 776 177 [789]

Saying this, she slowly uncovered the hole and whispered to the villager to stoop down and peer in. Masamba then cautiously bent over and peered into the imaginary hole. "No," said Asofalinda, "you will have to look deeper. It is a big hole and the spirit-animal is right at the back. But you must be very quiet or it will wake up and kill you first." So Masamba stooped lower and Asofalinda finished the scene with no further commentary. It was hardly necessary. She crept behind Masamba and kicked her heartily in the backside, and ran off laughing and clapping her hands with mirth. Even Masamba, who suffered the brunt of the joke, enjoyed it so much that the two of them re-enacted it four times that one afternoon. [522]

In ways like this, even on a rainy day when there is no hunting or gathering to be done, a camp can be made lively and entertaining. But generally rain brings depression. People sit in their huts and peer out miserably. On the whole, however, the tenor of life is even, wet 512 821 181

572 821 181 or dry, with few real ups and downs that affect the life of the group
as a whole.

224 Occasionally an elephant is killed, and that means the entire camp
361 will be abandoned at once and a new one built around the dead
527 animal, so that it can be eaten on the spot. The Pygmies point out
that this is easier than bringing the elephant to the camp. It means
a week of merry-making, of singing and dancing and no hunting.
177 The only trouble is that it also means visits from the villagers. On
592 such occasions they will pluck up their courage and venture into the
43 forest, feeling that with such an abundance of meat the Pygmies
574 will be in a generous frame of mind. The Pygmies try to avoid this
by immediately sending meat to the village. But when villagers do
come, they are generally courteously received and allowed to stay
for a day or two. After that, if they are slow with gifts of rice or
tobacco, the Pygmies have various ways of making them move on.
The forest is the world of the Pygmy, and he is not bashful about
telling a villager who outstays his welcome just what he thinks of
him.

177 I stayed in one camp which was only a few hours from the village
and on the way to a Negro fishing ground. We were constantly beset by villagers passing through, and after a while the Pygmies got
tired of feeding them, tired of being used as a convenient stopping
177 place. So when they were asked for food, the Pygmies would agree
525 on condition that the villagers join them in a game of *panda*. This
is a gambling game in which beans are thrown on a mat, or on a
flat piece of ground. Some of them are quickly scooped up by one
of the two players. The other, looking to see how many are left,
has to estimate at a glance how many his opponent has taken. He
then tells his opponent to throw down one, two, or three beans, or to
stay as he is. The count is then made—also at a glance—and if the
player has an exact multiple of four he wins. But against villagers
[181] Pygmies always win. For one thing they have an uncanny sense of

form that enables them in a moment to know the exact number 177
thrown down. And for another the villagers are not so nimble as the 525
Pygmies. When a Pygmy sees that he is going to lose by a couple [151]
of beans, he quickly drops them from the store he has concealed between his fingers, or even in his hair, thus by a triumphant jerk of his hands or his head throwing in the winning beans.

The villagers left that camp stripped of their fish, their tobacco, and whatever else they had to gamble away, and they soon came to prefer an alternative route that by-passed our camp.

There are a few villagers that are welcome in a Pygmy camp, but 177
they are rare. Others can come with sackloads of food and still get 186
a cold reception. I have seen this happen; as soon as the Pygmies 574
have divided up the food they send the villagers on their way. But others can come empty-handed and be received gladly, because they understand the Pygmies and the forest. For the Pygmies this is the [828]
criterion of a "real person," as opposed to the animal-humans who live in permanent villages out in the open, away from the shelter and affection of the trees.

Any visitations by villagers are temporary, and they usually have 648
some political significance. A Negro chief who wants to win more 177
Pygmies to his village may send out a son with gifts to stay in a Pygmy camp. Every day more gifts and food are sent out so that he can distribute these. It is a risky business because, as the villagers say, "The BaMbuti eat us up until we have nothing left for ourselves!" But if a chief's son wins the affection of the Pygmies, his father will have won a steady supply of meat—for a time, anyway.

One afternoon I saw two village girls arrive, followed by two 123
servants who threw down loads of plantains and sweet bananas, and 177
a sack of manioc flour. The servants left and the girls came over and [262]
sat down unconcernedly at Masamba's fire. Masamba came out of [521]
her hut and greeted them with warmth, and soon a number of

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• women gathered around, chattering away gaily and asking for news of the village.

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The girls were Amina, daughter of an important BaBira subchief, and her cousin. Her father was hoping, she said, that she might be allowed to stay for a few days and bring him back some meat. She obviously knew the Pygmies well, because without waiting to be asked she distributed the plantains. She said she would keep the manioc flour until the meat began to come in. Apparently she was well liked, because as soon as people heard of her presence they came over to shake her hand, in the manner of villagers, grasping each other's wrists. Kenge told me all about her, and said that her father was one of the least animal-like villagers. He asked me which of the two girls I thought looked the more attractive. I said Amina, without a doubt. She was the most beautiful girl I had seen in a long time; the BaBira are by no means noted for their good looks. Amina was tall and a warm brown in color. She carried herself with the inborn grace of Bantu women; her eyes were deep and thoughtful; her expression was kind and gentle. Yes, she was certainly the more beautiful of the two. Kenge nodded thoughtfully and changed the conversation.

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That night I sat up late with the men, and when I went back to my hut I was surprised not to see any bachelors sleeping on the floor as they usually did. But three logs were placed beside the bed and were glowing cheerfully. I sat down on the edge of the bed and found, as I had expected, that Kenge had curled up in my blanket. He was considerate enough, on such occasions, not to take my blanket onto the floor, but rather to take half of the bed. So I crawled in beside him and was about to say something when I realized that the body beside me was considerably taller than Kenge, and very differently shaped. It was Amina.

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It was a difficult moment, but I could see the whole situation at once. I had become the center of a nice political maneuver. The

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chief had sent his daughter to win the Pygmies, not by her gifts of plantains and manioc flour, but by winning me. The Pygmies, anxious to get what they could out of the situation, liking Amina anyway, but having some consideration for me, got Kenge to find out which of the two girls I preferred. That, evidently, was to be the limit of my choice in the matter. I confess I was glad I had chosen Amina, but I could see all sorts of difficulties arising if I were to take advantage of the situation. No doubt the chief had in mind the considerable bride-wealth he could demand should, by any chance, his daughter bear a mulatto child. Still, it was good of him to send his prettiest daughter.

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I considered for a minute or two and then said, "Amina," very quietly. It had begun to rain, and I half hoped she would not hear me. It would be a terrible disgrace to her—and to me—if I turned her out, but I wanted no part of a lengthy and costly dispute over bride-wealth. But Amina was by no means asleep. She laughed lightly and made fun of my KiNgwana name, which means "the long one." So I said, "Amina!" once more, a little more sharply, still trying to think what a supposed gentleman and scholar should do in such circumstances. But Amina was not helping. She just snuggled closer and said, "Yes, tall one?" Then in a moment of inspiration I simply said, "Amina, the roof is leaking." And with masculine authority I added, "Get up and fix it."

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Without a word she got up and started searching for the leak, pulling at the leaves until a steady trickle of water came down, splashing on the floor beside the bed. By the time she had repaired the damage and checked the whole roof with womanly efficiency I was asleep—at least so I pretended. With a sigh she pulled the blanket from me and also went to sleep—or perhaps she too was pretending. But it was a solution, if a chilly one. My last thoughts that night were that Kenge would at least have left me some of the

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This way she would preserve her reputation and I mine, and there would be no complications. And so it was. P 123

I grew very fond of Amina, and some time later, when I was in a village and became very ill, she walked ten miles every day to see me, and ten miles back. She brought me refreshing fruits and sweet-smelling plants and flowers, and sat beside my bed without saying a word. Only once, I woke up and found she was sitting on the edge of the bed and holding my hand in hers.

When the Pygmies moved camp, Amina took the opportunity to go back to her father's village. I was never sure whether I was glad, or more than just a little sorry, to see her go. But when I thought about it, I realized that apart from all the other reasons, Amina could never have stayed. No matter how well she was liked by the Pygmies, she was still a villager. She had not been brought up to do the hundred and one little things that a Pygmy woman has to know how to do. She did not even know how to beat on the hunt, let alone which vines to follow to find the delicacies hidden in the ground by their roots. She belonged to another world. P 186

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ing in the shadows, until with surprisingly swift and agile strides 533
she was once more in our midst. In her hands she held a long roll of 765
nkusa twine. The men continued singing, and as they sang, the old 533
woman went around knotting a loop around each man's neck, so 524
that in the end we were all tied together. The men made no attempt 289
to resist; rather, they ignored what was going on. When they were all tied in this way, however, they stopped singing.

Moke spoke—I am not sure whether it was for my benefit or 765
because it was his place to say what he did. He said, "This woman has tied us up. She has bound the men, bound the hunt, and bound the molimo. We can do nothing." Then Manyalibo said that we had to admit we had been bound, and that we should give the woman something as a token of our defeat; then she would let us go. A certain quantity of food and cigarettes was agreed upon, and the old woman solemnly went among us again, untying each man. Nobody attempted to loose himself, but as each man was untied he began to sing once more—the molimo was free. The old woman received her gifts and went back to Cephu's camp, where she and her husband were staying. The couple stayed for another week or two, but she danced only once again. Before she left us she went to every man, giving him her hand to touch as though it were some kind of blessing.

It was not long after this that everyone started talking about when they should bring the molimo to an end. There seemed to be no specific length of time that it should run, and it was just a question of convenience.

There was the matter of the elima to be considered, too, as evi- 881
dently one really was due to be held for two girls, each of whom had reached her first period. The main problem was not the fulfilling of ritual necessities, but rather how to make the most of the festive
occasion. There were different schools of thought as to whether 881
the elima should take place in the village or the forest; the younger 177

881 men held out for the village, the older for the forest. All the older
177 men except Tungana, that is. That wily old grandfather thought
881 the village was better as they might be able to make money out of
177 tourists who would pay to see them dance. Tourists had been in-
609 creasing in number ever since the Animal Station had been established at Epulu, and the Pygmies found tourists even easier to trick than villagers.

881 It was eventually decided that the elima, which had already begun
177 in Kondabate's hut, should go to the village and take over Ekianga's house, as it was the biggest and he was related to one of the girls anyway. The villagers would give food to the elima. Asofalinda would be in charge. Everyone else would stay a while longer in the forest.
[765] Then they would bring the molimo to the village one night and have a final dance there, because the villagers believed that a period of mourning, which is how they regarded the molimo, should end with a ritual feast, and so they would give the Pygmies more food. That would put all the men in a good humor to attend to their part of the elima festivities.

765 I was a little surprised that they should even think of bringing the
177 molimo to the village. Moke told me not to worry, that no villagers would know anything of what went on in the forest, and if any villagers came to watch they would only see the Pygmies imitating what the villagers do themselves. But he shook his head and added, "Even so, it *is* bad. It is a thing of the forest, and it should end there. Perhaps we shall have to end it twice."

361 The night before we were due to move back to the village every-
152 one was very quiet. The women prepared the food for the evening
[521] meal without talking to one another. Tungana sat outside his hut, hunched forward, his gray old head resting on one hand because he had an abscess on the side of his neck. Moke wandered restlessly from one end of the camp to the other, and Masisi snapped at every-
361 one who gave him an excuse. This was some three months after

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the molimo had begun, and we were in a camp much closer to the 361
village than we had been at Apa Lelo . . . Only about two hours' walk away. Cephu, as usual, had his camp at a distance, but rather farther removed than usual, and we saw less of him than ever. The next morning we found that he had abandoned his camp the night before and gone to join a hunting group farther to the west; he wanted no part of returning to the village.

Even the children were depressed and sat around in silent little 857
groups fitfully playing with spinning tops made from slices of forest 152
nuts. Every now and again one of them got in the way of an adult and was severely smacked. His cries brought only a sterner cuffing, and by nightfall the camp was filled with wailing children and bad-tempered adults. Only the youths seemed cheerful. For them the 883
village meant tobacco, palm wine, the wild erotic dancing the Pyg- 177 •
mies love to perform for the villagers, and a relaxation from the 152
tensions of the forest. They would no longer be hunting, so they would be free from the restrictions that way of life imposed. They would no longer be in the forest, so they would be free from its ever-present authority. If the villagers thought the BaMbuti then came under their authority, that was their mistake.

While the youths dreamed of the fun they were going to have, 883
particularly with the girls in the elima house, all the adults were 177
silent. Kenge, who although he was older still liked to associate 521
with the youths, stood boastfully in the middle of a group of admirers 273
and talked of all the village girls he was going to sleep with. And [836]
not only one a night, but two, three, perhaps even thirty. "And I am going to drink palm wine until there is no more to drink. I am going to steal all the palm wine there is in the village and drink it all myself, to make me strong. But I won't get drunk, so when they come to me and say, 'Kenge, why have you drunken all our palm wine?' I shall just say, 'You committer of incest' "—Kenge had a very descriptive word for this—" 'if I had drunk all your palm wine

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[273] would I be able to stand?' And I shall give them money to go and buy themselves beer."

"And where will you get the money?" asked young Kaoya, trying hard to believe that his idol was telling the truth.

"Their wives will pay me for sleeping with them, of course!" answered Kenge, and he went into a dubious pantomime illustrating just how he was going to do this.

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[152] Manyalibo, who had been more morose than anyone else, and who was lying on his hunting net at the kumamolimo, propped himself up and shouted across the camp. "You, Teleabo Kenge, you speak of the great man you are going to be when you get to the village. How is it that you cannot be such a man here in the forest? Why do you [765] spend all your time with children? Why do you leave the molimo at night and go to sleep like a suckling baby? How long have you been out of your mother's stomach? Come here at once and beat the banja for the molimo."

765 This is one of the few occasions on which Kenge did not answer back. He hesitated a second, then called out, "I am coming, Father." He went running over, picked up the banja, and started beating them for all he was worth. He called out to all the men to listen to him, not to be so lazy, to come to the kumamolimo and sing. Was not he, Teleabo Kenge, beating the banja? And was this not the last night of the molimo in the forest?

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[535] The singing that night was perhaps the best it had ever been. The molimo sang the most wistful songs, and the men answered it with love. When some of the youngsters began to dance Moke shook his head and told them to leave that for the village. Tonight was for singing. And just before dawn, when the molimo was about to leave the fireside, it sang to each of us in turn. It caressed the melody with love, and passed over our heads, one by one. As it left, Moke came around the group and stood a moment in front of each of us. His hands fluttered lightly around our bodies, occasionally touch-

ing us as gently as the breeze. When he had finished he stood by 765
the fire and sang to the forest by himself, with the molimo answering 533
from a great distance, getting fainter and fainter. Finally they
were both singing so quietly that I could hardly distinguish their
music from the music of the crickets and the frogs and the birds of
the night. Somewhere a hyrax gave its throaty, rasping call of despair, [186)
and an owl hooted. Moke sat down, and nobody spoke, and nobody
sang. Something wonderful had come into our lives and filled them [152]
with the magic of love and trust, and though we still possessed that
love and trust, we regretted the going of the power that had brought
it.

At dawn we were awakened as usual by the sound of the two 765
trumpets. But there was a quality about their tone that was harsh 534
and brash. We all knew that the real molimo had gone, but we had 177
to go through with the final ritual for the benefit of the villagers.
The bellowings did not last long, and soon the trumpets disappeared in the direction of the village with a bunch of noisy youths
in attendance. Later, when the main body of the camp was packed
up and ready to leave, one of the youths came running back and
told us with great excitement what fun they had had frightening
the villagers with the molimo, but that now it was safely hidden in
the forest, on the outskirts of the village.

We got a warm reception as we emerged from the plantations 177
among the neat rows of mud houses. The villagers eyed the baskets on the women's backs and tried to estimate how much meat they were bringing. They called out offers of free meals in an attempt to bribe their way into the favor of people whom they theoretically regarded as slaves. As we filed from the leafy plantation, leaving the forest behind us, we left a kind and friendly world and entered a different one. Here, if the world was open to the sky it was also open to greed and suspicion and treachery. Village women attached themselves to "their" Pygmies and tried to pry into the baskets

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177 to verify just how much meat there was, accusing them of having eaten it all themselves. But the Pygmies paid no attention. Some made for their own village and dumped their belongings there. I wandered on with the others who went straight to their patrons to whom they presented the meat they had brought with them. Before long they were sitting down in whatever shade they could find, fanning themselves to keep the flies and mosquitoes away, eating heartily from enamel dishes, drinking dirty village water from enamel mugs.

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361 After spending some time, rather like the Pygmies, greeting the various villagers, I returned to the Pygmy village and sat in the shade of my veranda looking down the dismal, double row of tumbledown huts. About half a mile away, in the background, the forest raised its tall dark face against the edge of the plantations, dwarfing the leafy plantain trees that were only three times as tall as men, making them look like blades of grass. Ineffectual blades of grass that had, with the help of village-man, usurped the place of the great primeval forest, but which in a year or two would be choked to a final death as the forest claimed its own. Clouds of dust arose as a small, disconsolate group of children played football with a ball presented to them by some fond villager. The dust got into my nostrils and made me feel suddenly bad-tempered. Kenge, who was trying to cook me a meal, cursed the children and told them to go and play somewhere else. But they had no bopi—no cool, clean streams, no vine swings. So they went off to chase the dogs, goats and chickens of the nearest Negro household.

At the far end of the little village stood Ekianga's house, the only one that was not falling to pieces. It straddled the width of the village, bridging the space between the two not very straight rows of smaller huts. The elima girls made a couple of sorties from the single
? [881] door, dashing around to the back of the house where they could not be seen. Otherwise all was quiet.

The evening meal was a good one, as the Pygmies had brought 262
in far more meat than they allowed to the villagers, and in return 264 439
for what they had given away they had received generous portions 177 •
of rice, beans, groundnuts and manioc, and a few of the tiny bitter
tomatoes which blend so well with manioc leaves and groundnuts
in the making of a sauce. When it was dark, the women and chil- 533
dren retired almost immediately, and the men gathered at the central 571
fire where four upright poles indicated the Pygmy version of a *baraza*, [345]
or men's meeting place. At first, several villagers came to see what [535]
was going on, and the Pygmies sang and danced for them. They
sang and danced until the villagers, tired after a heavy day's work
in the plantations, went to bed. Then the men really began to sing.
They sang and sang until it seemed almost as though we were back
in the forest. But any time there was a strange sound, and it was suspected that there might be a villager lurking about, they stopped.
They had guards posted all around to make sure they were not
caught unawares.

It must have been about three o'clock in the morning when the 765
molimo made its appearance. It came into the camp preceded by two 534
youths holding glowing firebrands in their hands. Waving the brands 372
high in the air, then swinging them down to touch the ground, they laid a fiery path for the molimo to follow. It was stately and imposing. Following this path of glowing cinders the molimo circled the village several times and then came to rest by the fire, where it sang very quietly. Just as I wondered if it was really going to sing as it did in the forest it moved off, and the tempo increased. Surrounded now by all the youths, the molimo started running around, faster and faster, making lightning swoops on the group of older men who were sitting by the fire. The rest of the men were either dancing in a frenzy around the fire itself, as if protecting it, or else they
were with the molimo. I heard a crunching sound as the molimo 765
plowed through a small field of sugar cane at the edge of the vil- 534

on us all and disappeared into his hut. The molimo, surrounded by 765
a triumphant entourage, now left the village, and we escorted it 534
back to the forest. Dawn was breaking, streaking the sky with gold
and crimson, and as soon as we had found a suitable temporary hiding place we returned to the village.

It was in a dreadful state of chaos. Black ashes and cinders covered 765
the ground everywhere; manioc plants were uprooted, sugar cane trampled down, chairs smashed, leaves torn off roofs and the mud from many walls crumbled on the ground. The Negro villagers were full of complaints, but in the Pygmy village men and women were silent, sleepily clearing up the wreckage and preparing for the midday feast. Nobles and headmen began arriving from neighboring villages, and as even the four poles that represented the Pygmy baraza had been smashed to the ground, they took possession of my veranda. They had come to supervise the ritual feast which, according to their custom, marked the end of the mourning ceremonies for Balekimito. They were a little surprised to find that the elima occupied the house in which Balekimito had died, but the Pygmies were in no mood to argue. They just shrugged their shoulders and said it was a good house. As far as they were concerned they had finished mourning their personal loss as soon as their mother had
been buried. From then onward they had been fulfilling their duty 761
to the forest by rejoicing with the molimo for the long and good 765
life that had been granted to the old lady. They had acknowledged 372
the gift of the fire of life from the forest, and the forest's right and 778
power to withdraw it; they had acknowledged and accepted the facts of life and death as both being, equally, the gift of their god.

But if the villagers wanted them to have a formal feast to end 765
the mourning, and were willing to give the food, they did not object. 574

The food was cooked and laid out in the center of my veranda, 177
which when the sun was high was the only cool and shady place in the village. This meant that the villagers were pushed to the edge as

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765 579 • 177 the Pygmies came in to eat. The men came in and sat down and ate without ceremony while their patrons watched hungrily. But they were not related to Balekimito, so they could not partake. Women, too, were excluded, according to the village rules of the game, but I saw a number of dishes quietly slipped to one side, and shortly afterward all the women were enjoying their own feast, concealed behind the elima hut.

C 765 563 P 765 177 The villagers asked if everyone had ritually bathed, to wash off the taint of death, and everyone politely said yes. The villagers then asked if the Pygmies had any meat to spare, and the Pygmies equally politely said no. They had given it all to the molimo, they said, and to this there was no answer, for it was a very creditable thing to do, in village eyes. I bought a large quantity of palm wine, however, and this mollified to some extent the strained feelings of the patrons. They knew they were being deceived and cheated, yet they felt they were only doing what was right in trying to impose their beliefs and practices on the forest savages who had no culture of their own. If the forest spirits struck the Pygmies down for not having heeded their patrons, for not having performed all the necessary rituals as they had been told, then it was not the fault of the villagers. They drank their fill and departed.

P 765 512 513 Once the Negroes had gone we all tried to get some sleep, for it was late afternoon and we had had no rest. But for three months the men had sung and danced and feasted every night and for three months the women and children had been sent to bed early, forbidden to come out and take part in the festivities except for the dance of the old woman. Now the molimo was over, and the women P 881 took advantage of the fact. After all, an elima had begun, and that was as important to the women as the molimo was to the men. At dusk all the girls of the elima came out of their hut. Their beautiful P [832] young bodies shone and glistened with the palm oil that had been carefully rubbed into the skin, making them even more alluring to

000 Chase as they were put through their exercises, all obscured the faint chirpings of crickets and birds and the chatter of monkeys. 361 241 312 [313] And as the sun rose and began to beat down on the parched and scorched earth, the village asserted once more its determination to dominate the hostile world around it. The men went off to cut down more trees for more houses and bigger plantations, and the women went to hoe and cultivate the small fields so laboriously prepared, which after another one or two years of hard work would have to be abandoned. For the soil which can support the primeval forest with luxurious ease refuses to bear fruit to the crops of the villagers for more than three consecutive years.

361 • 777 621 In the neighborhood of the Epulu there were, in fact, several villages. Some twenty-five years earlier, when Patrick Putnam first came to the spot and decided to settle there, there were none. He built his home with the help of various men of different tribes whom he took around with him to assist him in his work. Some were from villages several hundred miles away. They called in other helpers, and gradually the village of Camp Putnam came into being. A pretty, straggling village, neat huts dotted haphazardly either side of a gracefully curving track, just wide enough for a car to pass through to Pat's home. Even though its members came from half a dozen different tribes, it quickly assumed the characteristics of a traditional, tribal, forest village. The family feeling that is so powerful where a village consists of all the men of a single clan, their wives and children, was replaced by a common loyalty to Pat, who worked day and night in his small dispensary, saving the lives of the people he loved and, in the end, giving his own. Pat acted as chief in nearly all respects. Disputes were brought to him and he settled them, wisely and justly, according to the tribal laws he knew so well. The village began to attract Pygmies, who gradually attached themselves, again in a perfectly traditional manner.

To a lesser extent this was so even with the new and distinctly commercial village that was set up on the roadside, by the government, immediately after Pat's death. The main focus of the village was not, as in so many villages, in either special plantations or road work, but in the Station de Chasse. This, with its collection of live forest animals, became an attraction for wealthy tourists with time and money enough to make the trip from Stanleyville or Beni; hence the optimistic Belgian who built the motel directly opposite. A little farther up the road, away from the river, were the houses of several hundred workers. This village stretched right up to the entrance of Camp Putnam, and beyond was the Hotel de Bière and a line of a half-dozen or so stores. The majority of these villagers, as in Camp Putnam, were from distant districts and from many different tribes. But here they had nobody to hold them together, as Putnam had his workers; their disputes were settled arbitrarily, according to Belgian notions of right and wrong. It was a village filled with jealousies, deep-seated grievances and smoldering hatred. 361 177 621 [578]

A few kilometers to each side of the Epulu River were two traditional villages. To the west was Dar es Salaam. The name was brought from the coast by the slave-traders, and its inhabitants were all descendants of the almost universally disliked BaNgwana, who had sold their souls to the traders and helped them in the capture of slaves and the theft of ivory. The headman of Dar es Salaam was a friendly rogue, Musafili. About two kilometers away from Dar es Salaam was the camp of Musafili's Pygmies. Like every other Negro he referred to "his" Pygmies as though they were chattels. Although Dar es Salaam always offered the warmest hospitality, I never felt at ease there. The heritage of a bloody and treacherous past was only barely dormant, and the BaNgwana are suspected today, as they always have been, of practicing the most dreaded forms of witchcraft and sorcery. 361 181 175 [422] [563]

A little farther to the other side of the Epulu was a very different village, and one much more typical of the traditional settlement in 361

3: Turnbull B-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C They ^
775 brought with them their ancestral beliefs, but the spirits of their
[771] ancestors resented being taken away from their rolling, open home-
776 lands and forced to live in the forest. In the plains the very ground
C was sacred to the ancestors who had lived there for generations, but
[363] here there could be no such bond. The graves themselves had to be
[311] abandoned to the forest sooner or later, as the clans shifted endlessly in the search of fresh soil.

C [179] [643] [364] While the only place the villager could call home was the temporary, sun-scorched clearing which he had cut for himself, and in which he would live a few years at the most, to the Pygmy the whole forest was home, and the village an isolated and foreign territory, P 179 hostile but ultimately impotent, to be regarded with indifference, amusement, and occasionally with annoyance. The village people were envious of the Pygmies, though they tried to look down on C [629] them. They were compelled to respect the Pygmies by the fact of their own belief in the mystical bond between a people and the land of its ancestors. They had no such bond. Just as they were afraid of the spirits of the forest, so they were secretly afraid of the Pygmies, and made them offerings of the first fruits of their plantations, and gave them an important part in the ceremonies for the village dead—the dead who had to be buried in foreign soil that might belong to the village world now, but which would soon belong once again to the forest.

The relationship between the two peoples was a strange one, full of ambivalence and uncertainty. By and large the village was their only common meeting place, for the Negroes disliked going into the forest except when absolutely necessary. The village was the world of the Negro, so he naturally assumed a position of authority and domination in that world. But it was a position without any foundations, for the Pygmy had only to take a few steps to be in his own world.

The Negroes were unable to exercise any physical force to main-

^[i.e., the Negro tribes. – Analyst]

tain their control over the Pygmies, so they created and maintained the myth that there was a hereditary relationship between individual Pygmies and families and individual Negroes and families.

C 177 563 P 177

It was not a matter of slavery, rather of mutual convenience. The cost to the Negro was often high, but it was worth while. The Pygmy was able to do for him all the necessary chores that necessitated going into the forest and could bring him game that supplemented an otherwise largely vegetarian diet. And in later days, with the compulsory maintenance of larger plantations, the Negro found the Pygmy a useful source of additional labor. But for all of this he had to pay, and he was always uncertain how long any one Pygmy or group of Pygmies would stay with him. They were frequently miles away in the heart of the forest, and if the hunting was good no amount of coaxing would bring them back.

P C [464]

For the first week back at Camp Putnam, I found the villagers going out of their way to be generous to "their" Pygmies. The Pygmies wandered about idly, hanging around wherever they found food cooking, occasionally responding to a request to help with some kind of work. The village blacksmith, a man of many parts, adopted Masisi's family, though Masisi himself would have nothing to do with him. He said that Baziani was a trouble-maker, which he was, and that he was after Masisi's daughter, which was also true. But Baziani was wealthy, and Masisi's children spent most of their time in his baraza. They were well fed and looked after, and treated more as friends than anything else. Baziani, in return, made use of them to run errands, usually connected with his virtual monopoly of the local hemp market.

P 177 571 C 177 571 326 556 [443]

Baziani was genuinely fond of the Pygmies. In the evenings he used to bring out his drums and the Pygmies would gather around and dance. After a while Baziani would relinquish his part as a drummer, acknowledging the superiority of his friends. Then he sat back in his cane chair and watched with a contented smile. He was one of

P C [593]

P 177 the first to help in time of need; as a result he was one of the few
571 villagers who was never short of meat, with plenty of leaves for the
C 177 roof of his house, and invariably with a crowd of good-humored,
571 well-fed Pygmies sitting around in his baraza, waiting to do him
556 some small favor.

C Masisi, like Njobo and many of the others, had for a long time
177 been attached to a noble of the BaBira tribe, Ngoma, uncle of my
563 erstwhile would-be wife, Amina. But Ngoma was wealthy and had
P 179 many other Pygmies so he did not resent the defection of a number
of them to Camp Putnam. In fact he frequently came to visit them,
E or sent messages to find out how they were; and when they were
[574] near his home, some distance away, they were presented with stalks
of plantains and baskets of groundnuts and manioc. Whenever work
P C on Ngoma's plantation was behind schedule he could be sure of
[464] willing help that would avert the penalty of a heavy fine or confiscation.

P Manyalibo, however, was attached to Kapamba, the government
177 571 chief at Eboyo. For all his clowning, Manyalibo was crafty, and he
439 played Kapamba for what he could get. Eboyo had some of the best
C plantains in the region, and it was much closer than Ngoma's village.
177 571 Manyalibo seldom went there himself, and he refused all calls by
439 Kapamba to come and help in the plantation. Sometimes he sent
622 one of his daughters, or his adopted son Madyadya, to help the chief
and to maintain some semblance of a bargain, but they never stayed
for long. Once, when we were at Apa Lelo, Kapamba was in such
P dire need of help that he came out to the hunting camp himself.
[574] Manyalibo received him courteously enough, and housed him for a
few days, but firmly refused to return to the village with him or to
allow any of his family to return. Kapamba alternately flew into
tantrums and attempted to bribe Manyalibo with stories of the
abundance of rice and plantains waiting for him at the village. Finally
Manyalibo agreed to let his wife go, and he sent her off carrying a

basket with two legs of antelope as a gift for Kapamba's wife. The camp watched the chief leave with few regrets. They had only allowed him to stay because he had brought a quantity of food with him.

P 439 177 571 C 177 571 622

Manyalibo's wife returned two days later with her basket full to overflowing with delicacies from the village. She had told Kapamba that she did not want to stay longer without her husband, so he had no option but to allow her to return.

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Manyalibo's son-in-law, Ausu, was even more of a renegade. His "hereditary master" was André, the chief of a powerful Islamic village just beyond Eboyo. André's father, old Effundi Somali, had been a child when Stanley brought his relief expedition through the forest to rescue Emin Pasha. He used to tell stories of the dreadful wars that were fought in those days, and of the trail of destruction that Stanley had left behind him. While the old man was alive André had worked as head cook at Camp Putnam, but now he was chief in his father's place.

C 622 175 P [571]

Part Bira and part Ngwana, André inherited all the traits of the latter. In his dealings with Europeans he could be charming and helpful; he could also be cunning and crooked. With other villagers he was proud and avaricious, and he had a supreme contempt—which he could disguise whenever it suited him—for the Pygmies.

C 622 157 C [186]

A few years earlier, when Ausu had been hunting forest pig, a boar had charged him and wounded him badly, ripping his stomach and one leg. André had taken Ausu into his own house and cared for him, nursing him for months until he was well again. This was done under the guise of friendship, and I have heard André tell the story many times to illustrate how enlightened he is. But I have also heard Ausu's comment that André had done no more for him than he would have done for a valuable hunting dog. A Pygmy is not unresponsive to genuine kindness, and Ausu would not have left André soon after recovering if there had been any such kindness in the act. But he left and refused to return under any circumstances.

P C 571 758 C 563

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

000 the act. But he left and refused to return under any circumstances.

C A few years later I was with Ausu in the forest when we were
563 returning from a hunt. We were up above the Lelo River, where the
P forest was clear of all undergrowth. Ausu saw something move
177 439 among a heap of leaves, and we found a baby okapi lying there. The
[136] mother okapis leave their young, covering them with leaves, when
they go in search of food. Knowing that the Station de Chasse was
anxious to have a small live okapi, Ausu picked this one up and
P brought it back to camp. We took turns in carrying it over our shoul-
[482] ders, as although it was only a few days old it was both heavy and
frisky.

We eventually got it safely to the Station de Chasse, and anticipating some kind of trouble I asked the director to arrange to pay the reward directly to Ausu. Five hundred francs was the standard sum offered for a live okapi, but only if it survived for a week. We returned to the forest, and Ausu regaled the camp with stories of what he was going to do with the money, the equivalent of about ten dollars. Manyalibo asked him if he was going to give any to André. The suggestion raised a storm of protest; André was universally disliked by the Pygmies. But Ausu said that he would give him some, and eventually it was decided to give the chief two hundred francs out of the five hundred.

The very next day a delegation arrived from André's village with
P a letter from André to me. It said that he had heard Ausu was to
C be paid five hundred francs, and would I see that it was all paid over
[686] to him as Ausu was his Pygmy and had refused to work for him for
several years. I sent back a reply saying that the Station de Chasse
made their payments direct to the person who caught the animal,
and that Ausu had offered to pay André two hundred francs. For
C the next few days we had a series of notes and delegations, pleading,
[694] cajoling and threatening. Finally André said that if Ausu did not
give him all the money, he was going to bring a charge of theft

against him and have him put in jail. As the tribunals are all Negro, with no Pygmy members, even the most obviously distorted charge against a Pygmy is bound to succeed. C 563 177 439

Ausu decided that if this was André's attitude he was not going to give him a single franc. On the day of the payment I went with him to the Station de Chasse, saw him get the five hundred francs, and joined the director in advising him to climb over the fence and return through the forest rather than to leave by the main gate. And sure enough, as I left, there was André with half a dozen of his men, waiting. When he saw he had been tricked he went to the paramount chief of the area and had a court order made out for Ausu's immediate arrest and confinement to prison. But Ausu was already back in the forest, and in time even court orders are forgotten. And so with all his show of authority and superiority André was unable to do anything; trying to pursue a Pygmy in the forest was a task no villager would undertake for any amount of pay. C [693] C [694]

There are those, like André, who really believe that the Pygmies are inferior and are meant to be treated like slaves, but for the most part the villagers are much more sensible and realistic. If they want to have control over their Pygmies, they know it must be based on something other than threats of physical force. But even the most benevolent of them regard the Pygmies much as the Pygmies regard them in turn—as a kind of convenience. I know of only one villager who was almost accepted by the pygmies as one of themselves. That was Kaweki, the fisherman. C 563 177 186

Kaweki was a not-so-young bachelor of the BaBira tribe. He claimed to dislike women, saying they made far too much noise and cost far too much money. Most of the time he was in the forest, catching fish in dams and traps, drying them, and sending them down to market with his Pygmy friends. This struck the other villagers as an undignified, not to say an unsafe, procedure. But Kaweki was not one to care about what others thought. C 159 C [226]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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C After some persuasion he agreed to allow me to come out to his
123 fishing camp. He was known to dislike and actively discourage visi-
• 177 tors, so I was not surprised when he was vague as to the camp's
571 whereabouts, merely saying that his friends would bring me there
572 the following week. His "friends" turned out to be Kelemoke and
Hari, a young Pygmy who was a cousin of Kenge, from a village the
far side of Ngoma's. The four of us set off before dawn one morning.

P Even when a whole camp is on the move, men, women and chil-
123 dren, the pace of the Pygmy is swift. But when there are just two or
481 three active young hunters they maintain a steady trot for however
484 far they have to go. I found myself running to keep up, and we only stopped twice during the entire journey. The first time was when we were not far from the Lelo River. We rested among the ruins of an old deserted camp, and we each ate a banana and smoked a cigarette. The second time was shortly after midday, when we met Moke and another on their way back from Kaweki's camp. They were surprised that we had come so far; they themselves intended to
P stop over in one of the old camps for the night. Each of them carried
[372] a smoldering ember wrapped in a leaf, in one hand, and a bow and
bunch of arrows in the other.

C They warned us that Kaweki was not well, and said that it was
754 the *dawa nde BaNgwana*—the magic of the BaNgwana. This made
578 Kenge, Hari and Kelemoke all cluck their tongues, because the *dawa*
P
177 of the BaNgwana is the most powerful of all. Hari said that he had heard that Musafili was jealous because Kaweki was making so much money with his fish. Kenge, however, said that he thought it was Kaweki's own people, the BaBira of Babama village. They were
C offended, he said, that Kaweki should live in the forest with the
[776] BaMbuti instead of in his own village. They suspected him of being
in league with the evil spirits of the forest. Kelemoke nodded and said yes, it was true that Kaweki fell ill every time he returned to the village, and that it must be the strongest kind of witchcraft to reach

so far out into the forest. Everybody was unhappy, and we resumed C 754 578
our journey at a slower pace. P 177

We were in an area where there were a number of streams, tributaries P
to three large rivers which had their source not far to the north-east, 123
spreading out in different directions. There was a lot of heavy 48
undergrowth and we had to follow trails made by antelope. Even the 133
Pygmies had to bend almost double. Hari was leading, and Kenge
shouted at him from behind that there was a much better and quicker
way. Hari laughed at his cousin and said, jokingly, that Kenge was P
a white man's Pygmy, how could he know anything about the forest? 829
Kenge made some uncomplimentary retort, and motioned for 186
me to follow him. We ducked off to one side, and for a while the
going was worse than ever. Very quickly the sounds of the other
two were lost, and I had momentary doubts, for every now and
again Kenge stopped to listen, peering this direction and that. After
another couple of hours Kenge pointed ahead and I heard a new
sound, a distant waterfall. "*Apa nde Kaweki,*" he said; "Kaweki's
camp." Usually he would have said a good deal more, but I was
glad to see that the long day's trek had left even Kenge breathless.

We came to the narrow but swift River Kare, and waded through P
it with caution. Kenge said it was a dangerous river, unexpectedly 136
deep in places, and full of the small but vicious forest crocodile. It
was here that Kolongo, Ekianga's older brother, had died two years
ago. The waters swirled angrily; they were muddy and full of debris,
the banks were slippery, and it was plain there must have been a
heavy rainfall recently. On the far side the ground rose sharply before
dipping down to the valley where the Itoro River flowed with a
grandeur only found with forest rivers. The undergrowth disappeared,
and once again we were in one of those sylvan glades where every
leaf seemed to tremble a welcome. It was warm and friendly, and as
we began to descend the rumble of the waterfall swelled into a roar. P

Kenge made his way to the edge of the Itoro, just below the falls; 123 484

P 123 it was wide and strangely smooth, but flowing in spate with all the
484 majesty and power of a river twice the size. Kenge said we would
wait for the others there, so as not to shame them in front of Kaweki
P [515] by arriving first. He went to the water and washed himself. He disapproved of my refusal to do the same, but I was too tired even to
sit down. I just propped myself up against a tree and waited. It was
not much more than fifteen or twenty minutes later when Kelemoke
and Hari came into sight, the one trotting quietly behind the other,
apparently as fresh as when they had set out. They feigned surprise
at seeing us, and said they had stopped to hunt on the way and had
thought we would be in the camp by now. Kenge retorted that he
was sorry they had caught nothing—we had been waiting two hours,
maybe three or four, in case they were lost. We moved on, and in a
few minutes, by-passing the falls, we came once more to the banks of
the Itoro, and into Kaweki's camp.

C It was a mixture of Negro village and Pygmy camp. The clearing
177 was only some twenty yards across; on one side was Kaweki's house,
361 built in the rectangular shape of a typical village house, but with
342 walls hung with leaves instead of packed with baked mud. At right
angles to it was another hut, long and low, the eaves coming right
down to the ground so that the entrance gaped in a great triangle.
We dropped our bundles on the ground and went into Kaweki's hut,
C calling from outside that we had arrived. The hut was divided into
[353] two by a leaf screen, the outer half being a kitchen with a drying
[251] rack for the fish. The rack was full, and a fire underneath did double
[417] duty, cooking food and smoking the fish. On the far side of the
[354] screen Kaweki lay on a bed of fresh leaves. A young Pygmy girl
P knelt beside him, gently massaging his chest. She was Hari's sister.
C 571 Hari greeted her, then went to Kaweki and, addressing him as "Father,"
● 177 asked him how he was. Kaweki was almost too weak to speak,
758 but he took our hands in turn and apologized for not having been
able to get up to greet us. He said, "My daughter will get you

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something to eat." He gave Hari's sister a playful push on the head, P C 571
then lay back and seemed to go to sleep. 177 958

Hari led us out and into the long triangular hut. We went right P
through to the back and there, on each side, was a narrow bed of C 571
sticks. Here, he said, Kenge and I were to sleep. This was the visitors' 177
hut, he exclaimed. He and his sister slept in Kaweki's house. I asked 574 C
who the visitors were, as Kaweki was reputed to have none. "Oh, 342
I don't mean villagers," Hari said. "I mean Pygmies, his friends." [352]

I had barely washed and sat down in the middle of the clearing P C
to eat the food prepared by Hari's sister, when there was the un- 123
mistakable sound of a band of Pygmies approaching. In a few min-
utes a score of them burst into the clearing—young men and women,
laughing and shouting their greetings.

They said that they had heard that Kaweki was ill, so they had P C
come to hunt for him and make him well. What had promised to be 123
a peaceful rest in a lazy fishing camp now threatened to be something 571
very different. These Pygmies had come as far as we had, but within 574
minutes of arrival they were off again for a quick hunt before the P [224]
sun set. Kenge himself joined them, taking Kaweki's two hunting
dogs and arming himself with a stout short-shafted spear. The P
women stayed behind to improvise some shelter for the night. But [342]
they decided it was too much work, so they just added some sticks
and leaves to the visitors' hut, forming an elongated windbreak that
reached almost over to Kaweki's house. By the time the men came P
back, empty-handed, they had installed themselves and were boiling [252]
pots of plantains and manioc, together with fish to which they had
helped themselves from Kaweki's rack. That night those who could
not squeeze into the shelters or into the overcrowded visitors' hut
slept in Kaweki's house. I myself found that the longed-for blessing
of sleep did not come easily. Kenge had, of course, found an old P
girl friend among the newcomers, and the two of them lay together, [832]

P C 123 571 574 beside me, all night long, flirting and laughing. Even though I lost a lot of sleep I learned several new facts of life.

P [832] Over the next few days I saw the hunters go off to bring back the meat that would make their friend well and strong; and each day F C 571 574 177 758 they collected roots and herbs which they prepared and gave to Hari's sister to treat Kaweki with. Just their very presence, boisterous and cheerful, was a tonic to the invalid. On the second night he came out into the clearing and lay down beside the fire, covered with a blanket. He joined in the conversation of the Pygmies, joking and telling stories in their own manner. Then he half sang and half chanted legends of the past, urged on by Hari, who sat nearby with all the attentiveness and affection of a son, smiling happily when he saw the villager that he loved as a father slowly regain his strength and life.

In a few days Kaweki was up and about, though he still tired quickly. He thanked his friends and told them that they had no need to stay longer if they wanted to go. But it was a happy camp, and everyone was in favor of staying. Kaweki had built a dam above C [226] the falls, channeling all the fish into a long wicker trap—some twenty feet of elaborate basketry which caught the fish and held them firmly in its meshes until they were pulled out and killed. But the recent storm, which had broken just the day before we arrived, had breached the dam and damaged the trap. The Pygmies decided that they would rebuild it for Kaweki, and while a few of them hunted the rest went off and cut the wood needed, and returned to work under Kaweki's supervision.

In the evenings the Pygmies sang songs they would ordinarily never have sung in the presence of a villager. But Kaweki was a lover of the forest, and to the Pygmies that was all that mattered. P [533] On the evening when Kaweki actually danced and declared himself completely cured, the Pygmies responded by singing a song of the molimo, just as they would have done for one of their own people—a song of praise and thanks to the forest for saving one of its children, even if he was a villager.

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Elima: the Dance of Life

P C 177 WITH THE PYGMIES and the villagers coming into contact, both as individuals and groups, it was inevitable that over the years each should adopt some of the other's customs. The contact between them was sometimes intimate and friendly, as with Kaweki, and sometimes it was formal and hostile, as between André and Ausu. Most frequently its purpose was just a matter of barter, and at all times each regarded the territory of the other as a foreign place.

P C 177 178 When a custom was adopted by one people, they gave it their own particular character and meaning, and frequently changed it so that it was all but unrecognizable, except through the common

use of the original name. Such was the case with the molimo, and P C
such was also the case with the elima. Who borrowed from whom 177
is a difficult question, and perhaps not a very important one. The 178
difference that emerges in the process of borrowing is much easier
to see and adds much more to our understanding.

To both peoples the elima is concerned with the arrival of a P C
young girl at the age of maturity, her transition from girlhood to 881
the full flowering of womanhood. This coming of age is marked
more dramatically for girls than for boys by the physical changes that
take place. Both Pygmies and villagers recognize the significance of
the first appearance of menstrual blood, and both celebrate it with a
festival which they call "elima." But there the similarity ends.

My friend Amina told me a great deal about the elima among C [115]
the BaBira, and I learned more from older women in different villages
that I lived in from time to time. Everywhere, right through C
to the very edge of the forest, I found the same story among the 881 C
villagers. Blood of any kind is a terrible and powerful thing, associated [826]
with injury and sickness and death. Menstrual blood is even [841]
more terrible because of its mysterious and regular recurrence. Its
first appearance is considered by the villagers as a calamity—an evil
omen. The girl who is defiled by it for the first time is herself in
danger, and even more important she has placed the whole family
and clan in danger. She is promptly secluded, and only her mother
(and, I suspect, one or two other close and senior female relatives)
may see her and care for her. She has to be cleansed and purified,
and the clan itself has to be protected, by ritual propitiation, from the
evil she has brought upon them. At the best, the unfortunate girl
is considered a considerable nuisance and expense.

It is generally assumed that the girl was brought into this condition C 881
by some kind of illicit intercourse, and her mother demands 584
of her who is responsible. This is the girl's chance to name the boy [836]
of her choice, whether or not she has even so much as spoken to

during the elima, they sing to celebrate the blessing of potential 881
motherhood conferred on the fortunate girl or girls. The month or 182
two that the festival lasts gives them time to adapt themselves to the new situation, but they have no need for elaborate ritual acts. When [885]
the girls appeared that night and sat down with the women, and sang with them before all the camp, that was a formal public acknowledgment of their new status as women. And yet the elima dragged on for several days afterward.

Part of the reason, of course, was that if they ended with a feast, 881
in the tradition of the villagers, the villagers would be so pleased 177
that they would probably contribute most of the food. And so it was 574
in this case. For all other practical purposes the elima had come to an end the night they sang together. But the girls had another reason; they wanted to placate the villagers. Sabani in particular had been extremely upset about the nonorthodox way this elima had been conducted. He, and many others, felt it was wrong for the girls to go wandering about from village to village, sometimes sleeping overnight in camps several miles away. This was unheard of. It was, to the villagers, as though a colony of lepers were wandering at large. But even more they resented the liberties the girls took with village custom. There 881
is a certain dress that village elima girls are meant to wear, because 177
the special leaves of which it is made have the magical power of pro- 292
tection; other dress is ineffective and invites disaster. The Pygmy girls, however, found that the ineffective leaves were far more attractive. As they themselves said, "This plant makes such pretty skirts; why should we make ourselves ugly with that plant? This is a time to rejoice." They also liked to imitate the village boys' ini- 881
tiation, and this so infuriated, and worried, the village traditionalists 177
that they threatened to invoke the most powerful curses on all the 574
girls. And so the girls put on a traditional ending, village style, to appease them.

On a Sunday morning they came out of their house as soon as

881 the first light of dawn flecked the sky with gold. They went down
177 to the banks of a forest stream, where it widened out into a silent
574 pool, and bathed themselves in half-hearted imitation of an elaborate village ritual. Then they oiled their bodies and donned oily new bark cloths and returned to dance in the village. They danced in a tight little circle while the women cooked the food. The villagers came to watch approvingly and to see that the food was properly distributed, for only certain people may eat it. They also made sure that all the leaves which had been used as a sleeping mattress in the elima house were thrown away and the house cleaned thoroughly. In this way they satisfied themselves that no harm would come to "their" Pygmies. The ancestors would be appeased by the feast, and the evil spirit that hovered around the unclean girls would be driven away.

The girls found it all rather tedious and boring, and as soon as they were able they broke off from their dancing and went wandering around the village. Akidinimba was in search of Pumba, who had failed her badly in the final ceremony. The others visited from house to house, in the hopes of gifts and compliments. The older women sat around and enjoyed the food for as long as it lasted; then they broke up and went about their business as though nothing had happened.

The men, for some time, had been talking about where they would build the next hunting camp.

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The Marriage of Kenge

P 177 585 C 563 585

THE END OF THE ELIMA precipitated a crisis in the village. One of the many ways in which the villagers try to exert control over the Pygmies is by seeing that they are married according to Negro custom. The villager believes this achieves two ends—it subjects the married couple to the same supernatural authority that controls married villagers (the authority of village ancestors), and by careful manipulation and matchmaking it can increase and improve his own stock of Pygmies.

The Pygmies accept this, but in point of fact they consider a village wedding as no more than a formal betrothal at the most, and a

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P 177 585 C 563 585

good excuse for a mild flirtation and a great deal of feasting. If two Pygmies want to get married, and they are near a village, then they gladly undergo the village ritual, sanctifying the bond later in their own manner. Everyone is happy; the villagers think the marriage is a success because it was performed according to their customs, while the Pygmy knows it is a success because it followed his as well.

P 881 177 583 C [881] [584]

The villagers naturally looked on the elima as a prelude to the marriages of Akidinimba and Kidaya. The Pygmies, however, regarded it in no such light. They wanted to get back to the forest, where the girls could get married in their own time and in their own way. This would involve no more than an exchange of visits between the families concerned, and the groom's presentation to his in-laws of a large antelope, and perhaps some arrows and a bow. But none the less they were tempted by the idea of more feasting. So there was considerable conflict of ideas and ideals, particularly as the villagers had their own ideas as to whom the girls should marry.

P 881 584

The elima had created a crisis in another direction also. Pumba, whom Akidinimba had loved so ardently and beaten so thoroughly to show her affection, had kept his part of the bargain by coming to the elima house during the final week, fighting his way in as a man. But once inside, instead of making love to Akidinimba he paid court to Kidaya. Fortunately for Kidaya, but unfortunately for Pumba, she did not respond, and without her permission Pumba had no way of forcing his attentions further. So he stalked out of the elima house, pursued by shrieks of rage from Akidinimba. He took his friend Kelemoke's hand briefly, then left without a word. He crossed the Epulu and went back to his camp, and he was seen no more.

P 584

Everyone was upset, because they all felt that the sooner Akidinimba got married the better. Besides, Pumba was popular—so much so that some pressure was brought to bear on Kidaya to force her to accept him. But Kidaya had set her heart on a handsome youth named Atete, who was attached to the village of Katala, several miles

beyond Eboyo. So she refused to have anything to do with Pumba. 584
Since the prime objective was to get Akidinimba married, once it
was plain that Kidaya would not take Pumba, everyone lost interest
in her and returned to the problem of her fellow initiate. Circum-
stance forced the issue, for while all this was going on a close relative
of Akidinimba's, a boy named Mulanga, decided to get married to
Atete's sister. Nobody saw any harm in this, and so arrangements
were pursued and they were duly married. Mulanga was quite non- 585
plused by the ritual, for he had spent most of his life in the forest 177
and knew little of village customs. He was particularly perturbed
when at the end of the ceremony his bride was seized by a village
woman and led away. He was not quite sure what to do and trotted
behind them at a safe distance until he was able to follow his wife
into the house that had been set aside for him.

Mulanga's marriage meant that he was obliged to provide a sister 583
for his bride's brother, Atete, to marry. Villagers will compensate 584
families for the loss of a daughter by the payment of money or goods,
but the Pygmies find it necessary to arrange for an exchange, so that
no group is ever depleted of its womenfolk. Akidinimba, who had
still not forgotten how she had been jilted and insulted, saw in this
situation an opportunity for revenging herself on Kidaya, the unwilling receiver of Pumba's attentions. So she volunteered to marry
Atete. Everyone, except Kidaya, was delighted, and Atete and his
family agreed. By the time the date for the wedding was set, Akidinimba began to have doubts and thinking of the freedom she was
about to lose she wept day and night. But there was no escape. The
villagers of Katala had arranged a great feast and this made everyone
all the more anxious for the wedding.

Atete, however, heard of some honey far off in the forest, several 585
days' march away, and at the last moment he set off. The villagers
protested loudly, but Atete merely said that the wedding could take
place any time, but the honey could not wait. As it was only a

marry her, the way she flirted. In other circumstances Akidinimba would have attacked her brother, for she was twice his size, but she had lost all her bounce and was so miserable by this time that she just burst into tears once more, rolling over and over on the dirty floor. The second day ended more unhappily than the first, with still no news from Atete. The messenger that had been sent out had himself not returned. 585 602 593

Early next morning, however, the messenger came back with several leaf bundles full of honey, and announced that Atete was on his way and would be arriving soon. Villagers and Pygmies alike began making preparations feverishly, but by the time Atete arrived it was too late to do more than have a dance, and the actual wedding was postponed for yet another day. By this time the villagers were thoroughly tired of having to feed a large wedding party for so long, and they went through the ritual just as fast as they could. The wedding began in the morning, and Akidinimba cheered up immensely when someone pointed out to her that it is better to be married than to be jilted, particularly when you are all dressed for the wedding. She laughed and giggled all the time an old village woman was telling her, as custom demands, how to behave toward her husband, what a serious business this was, and how she would be struck dead if she did not adhere to the rules. Finally the old woman gave up and just pushed her into the bridal house, where Atete was waiting, and slammed the door on them. Shortly afterward a rather subdued Akidinimba emerged, and began cooking her husband's supper. 585 [177]

There was a great deal of speculation among the Pygmies as to whether or not this union would last, but it was settled when one day Atete arrived and presented his in-laws with a fine sondu antelope. He said that he was very content with his wife, and he had not found it necessary to beat her at all often. 593

Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used 000

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583 Sometimes Pygmies
829 talked about the system of bride-wealth used
• 177 by the villagers, and sometimes they wished that they could use the
same system. But for the villager the woman is a laborer in the fields
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583 who can cultivate crops that can be sold for cash. From the village
462 groom's point of view it is important to make a satisfactory payment
as it not only enhances his prestige but also gives him the assurance
that his in-laws will be on his side, not wanting to have to return so
much wealth should their daughter change her mind. For the Pyg-
P mies this is unworkable. To them a woman is more than a mere
583 producer of wealth; she is an essential partner in the economy. With-
462 [581] out a wife a man can not hunt; he has no hearth; he has nobody to
build his house, gather fruits and vegetables and cook for him. So a
group that loses a woman looks for a woman in return. The Pygmies
P extend the term "brother" or "sister" so that it can be applied to
[601] almost anyone of the same age group, however distantly related, and
[561] this means it is seldom impossible to find someone to exchange, and
someone who is willing. But sometimes a little coercion is needed. So
it was with my friend Kenge.

P Kenge often laughed at the villagers, and at the way they sponsor
583 Pygmy weddings, even paying bride-wealth to each other—the
177 "owner" of the groom to the "owner" of the bride. He found it
186 C particularly funny when such a marriage broke up, because the two
563 Pygmies considered it a mere flirtation, and the villagers then had to
583 fight over the necessary restitution of wealth. But he wished he had
been able to use the system to get himself a wife.

P He was deeply in love with a particularly attractive young girl
581 named Maliamo and badly wanted to marry her. He had three sis-
593 ters, but one was married to Masimongo, one was still too young,
and the third was unwilling. Yambabo, the unwilling one, was a very
determined girl, as stubborn as Kenge himself. She was quite fond of
Maliamo's brother, a slim, light-skinned youth called Taphu. But
nothing in the world would make her admit it once she saw that
Kenge wanted to use her in order to get Maliamo.

593 He then went up to his mother and greeted her, which he had not done since she entered the camp. She put her arms around him, and it was strange to see the proud, sophisticated and very adult Kenge allowing himself to be embraced with such a show of affection. But what Badorinji had said was true—he was a good son. And he was a good brother too, for when Badorinji had finished hugging him, doing a little dance at the same time, he took the weeping Yambabo's hand and led her to the hut opposite mine, and there he put his arm around her and whispered something in her ear and he sent her inside to lie down and sleep.

584 Taphu sent word back that Yambabo would have to hurry as he
was off to the forest and would not be back for a long time. Maliamo
also sent a message, to say that the villagers would not let her come
until Yambabo had married Taphu, because they did not trust
584 Yambabo. The villagers announced their opinion that Kenge had
• 177 already slept with Maliamo so much that it would not hurt him to
[836] wait. Kenge was furious, because this meant that he would have to
go through a village wedding, unless he wanted to alienate the vil-
[571] lagers by ignoring them. This would have meant losing good ex-
[439] change-friends who kept him supplied with village goods in return
for a few favors in the forest. Kenge enjoyed all the fun and games
[186] of a village wedding when someone else was involved, and he was
content for Yambabo to go through the ceremony, but for himself
he wanted no part of stupid village customs. He was going to carry
584 Maliamo away and give her parents an antelope, or maybe an ele-
[583] phant, like any self-respecting Pygmy. He began dreaming out
loud, describing exactly how he was going to track the elephant,
and maybe kill a buffalo or two on the way, and he only came back
to earth when I asked him how he was going to bring the elephant
back to the village. He said that I would see; he was going to Maliamo
right now. He set off at once. The next day he returned alone.
Maliamo had gone into hiding, not wanting to jeopardize her broth-

er's chances by going to live with Kenge before Yambabo had been 584
well and truly bound to Taphu.

There was only one thing to do, so Kenge made arrangements for 585
Yambabo to leave the next day, with a suitable wedding party. They 177
would stop overnight at Katala's village and continue the next day
to Babama. At this point an uncle of Taphu's died, and the Babama
villagers sent a message that the wedding was off. Taphu, however,
sent word that as far as the Pygmies were concerned the death made
no difference and the wedding was on. Kenge did not want to offend
the villagers at this stage, so he delayed a few days, and after a
respectable lapse of time he finally sent the wedding party off. But not 585
before Yambabo had had yet another change of mind. As she was [302]
being rubbed with palm oil and camwood paste, so that she would
look her very best, she suddenly reached out for the hearth. Before [765]
anyone could stop her she had covered herself from head to foot in
ashes, the sign of deepest mourning. As the rest of the party had
already been oiled and painted for some time, and were anxious to be
on their way, there was not much sympathy for Yambabo. They
told her that if she wanted to walk through the villages like a ghost
they did not mind, but one way or another she was going. Masisi,
who was acting as her father, gave her a long lecture, during which
his wife hurriedly wiped off the ashes and smeared on more oil.

The party finally got off and had a slow and pleasant journey, 585
stopping in each village in the hopes of receiving presents of food 177
and palm wine. It stopped over at Katala's, where the long-suffering [574]
family of Ngoma fed the whole party lavishly, and the next day it
arrived at Babama. Yambabo was led through the village to the Pygmies'
encampment, but the villagers came hurrying after. They said
the wedding could not possibly take place there so soon after the
death of a relative and would have to be held in the village. Taphu
wandered out of his hut to see what was going on. He was dressed
in a dreadful array of cast-off clothes given him by the villagers.

585 179 He did not seem particularly interested, because after listening to the argument for half a minute he yawned and went back into his hut without saying a word to anyone.

We all trekked back to the village, and there, under the watchful eye of the villagers, the wedding began. Masisi had refused to come, saying the Babama villagers were the worst savages of all, so Mambunia came in his place. He supervised as all the wedding gifts were placed on the ground, and he watched as various villagers, each in the hopes of improving his chances of getting some meat from the young couple, came forward and added either money, ax-blades, or small pieces of cloth. There were already several pots, quite a number of arrows, and a few trinkets given to the party at Katala village. The villagers who claimed Maliamo felt that this treasure belonged to them, but Mambunia denied this strongly. He pointed out that in any case, according to their own village custom, the gifts should sleep with the couple that night. Reluctantly the villagers agreed, and Mambunia promptly scooped the gifts up and brought them into the wedding house.

Taphu was supposed to put in an appearance at this point, but he could not be found. It was two hours before he was discovered, asleep, and dragged to the spot where we were all sitting around, eating 585 and drinking and singing. He arrived in his tattered village clothes 292 but was promptly taken inside and made to change into a new cloth, put on a woven straw hat decorated with feathers, and arm himself with a new bow and a sheaf of arrows. Arrayed like this he appeared at the doorway in the late afternoon. Yambabo looked up and actually smiled. Taphu looked very handsome and imposing, if somewhat uninterested, and having made his duty appearance he went back inside and fell asleep again.

585 179 [574] That night the wedding party stayed at Babama, all sleeping in the wedding house, feasted royally by the villagers. The next day the rites were completed in a ceremony which consisted largely of the

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formal appearance of Yambabo, standing between two of her sisters, preceded by a still uninterested-looking groom. As villager after villager lectured the bride, Taphu shifted his weight listlessly from one foot to the other, scratched his back with his new arrows, and gazed longingly at some monkeys in the trees nearby. The villagers warned Yambabo that she belonged to them now; she could not call on Kenge whenever she wanted help but would have to come to them. They pointed out which villagers she was expected to help when she and her husband came from the forest, and she was told of all the things they would expect her to do for them. She was finally reminded of the villagers that had contributed gifts for the wedding.

Yambabo and Taphu were led back into the house, and the others resumed their singing and dancing and drinking. Munyunga, the burly villager who had done most of the talking and who claimed to "own" Taphu and Maliamo, said that he wanted to wait a while, according to custom, and then bring Maliamo with a large wedding party to Kenge's village. But to this the Pygmies as one man absolutely refused to agree. There was a great deal of argument, and it was plain that Munyunga was determined to have at least a return feast arranged for him. Normally he would have arranged this with Kenge's "owner," but this was wily old Kapapela, the paramount chief's brother, who had already made it known that he was in complete agreement with Kenge's refusal to have a village wedding, thus saving himself the expense. So Munyunga knew his chances were slim, particularly as Kenge was no longer even at Kapapela's village and refused to go there. He finally agreed to arrange matters with Kapapela later; in the meantime he would bring Maliamo to Kenge with a small party, but he would expect food, drink, and some kind of gift. He suggested a new hat. He agreed to come the next day, so we returned to Camp Putnam well pleased.

Munyunga arrived early the following morning, with Maliamo and an escort of three villagers. He was clearly annoyed by the fact

585 that only Moke and Masisi were there to greet him. Everyone else
177 had disappeared, many of them to hunt and others simply because they did not like Munyunga. He was even more upset when Masisi, instead of greeting him first, and then the villagers, went straight to Maliamo and led her away to his hut so that she could put down her bundle and refresh herself. Kenge was nowhere to be found. Moke invited the villagers to sit on my baraza, and they made loud remarks among themselves to the effect that as I was Kenge's new "owner" I should offer them beer. But I wanted to see what Kenge would do on his own, so I did nothing, although I had several containers of palm wine waiting inside the hut.

Kenge was finally found, engrossed in a gambling game behind Ekianga's house. He had hoped that the villagers would become discouraged and leave. But after two hours of patient waiting he emerged and slowly wandered across the clearing toward us. He stopped to look inside several huts on the way, chatting to anyone he could find as though he was completely unaware that the wedding party was waiting for him. He was as slow and as surly as he could be, and when he finally reached the villagers, who by then were not even trying to disguise their anger, he just took each of their hands in turn and then turned his back on them and asked me what I would like to have for lunch.

This was too much for Munyunga, who stood up and shouted that he was going to take Maliamo back with him, that Kenge was a child who did not know how to behave like an adult. This touched Kenge on a very sore spot, for he prided himself on being extremely adult. He motioned Munyunga to sit down again, and said, "You are only villagers—Ebamunyama is a white man. Isn't it right that I should ask him first?" I hastily said that I could wait, and without another word Kenge went away. About half an hour later he returned with two bottles of beer, some dried fish, and a bottle of palm oil. He put these on the ground beside Munyunga, and then wan-

dered out into the middle of the village, where he played with the 585
children. The next thing I knew he had disappeared again, and I 177
was told he had stolen one of the villager's bicycles and gone off [685]
down the road to Katala.

The Pygmies were obviously going to have nothing further to do with the villagers, and I felt sorry for Maliamo who had come and sat down beside them in the baraza. Feeling that I was in some way [123] responsible, I asked if it was proper for me to offer them some palm wine. This eased the situation slightly. Munyunga and his friends stayed and drank their beer and palm wine, while Masisi and Moke did their best to pacify them by offering to have a meal cooked. But they said no, all they wanted was to drink. Only two Pygmies came to join them, and then only to see if they would be offered any leftovers. But Munyunga was not parting with a drop, even for Maliamo, who continued to sit uncomplainingly by his side. When the beer and palm wine were all finished, Munyunga still stayed—angry, surly, and very drunk indeed. Occasionally he called for more to drink, or asked where his new hat was, but nobody answered him. The few people that were in the village just went their way as though there were no visitors at all. Moke was fast asleep outside his hut, and Masisi was fashioning a new bow, never so much as glancing at the baraza.

It was beginning to darken when the villagers left, saying that the Pygmies were a lot of animals who didn't know how to behave, and that if Maliamo did not bear Kenge any children it would not be *their* fault.

As soon as the unwelcomed guests had left, the whole atmosphere 585
changed. Pygmies appeared unexpectedly from all directions, crowding around Maliamo to greet her. She went to the little hut that had been given to her and Kenge and began cooking. Kenge appeared, as if by magic, laughing and telling how he had met Mu-

585 nyunga on the road, and that at the rate he and his friends were going it would take them three days to get back to Babama.

When evening fell, Kenge went up to Maliamo for the first time during the entire day and sat down with her as she served the food she had cooked. He brought me over a bowl and said he wanted me to try his wife's cooking. He sat beside me and ate, as he often did, from the same dish. I was a little curious that he had not paid more attention to Maliamo and I asked him about it. He laughed and replied that Maliamo was no stranger to him; the only difference now was that with Yambabo's marriage to Taphu, Maliamo was able to come to his village instead of his having to go to hers. He had [583] given her father an antelope; why did the villagers have to make all this fuss? He abruptly turned the conversation back to more important things—did I or did I not like his wife's cooking? I did.

585 179 186 At the central fire everyone was discussing the way Kenge had treated the villagers. They were mostly secretly delighted, but Masisi said that even if Munyunga *was* a drunken fool, there was no need to be quite so rude to him; that Kenge should have stayed, as he and Moke had done, and merely sat and said nothing. Mulanga, remembering his own wedding, said that he could see no sense in a village wedding anyway. But Masisi pointed out, "If we did not let the villagers think that they arrange our marriages, then how could we expect them to give us such fine feasts and present us with so many gifts?" Moke, picking up his pipe and passing it to his son to be filled, added, "After all, it doesn't really make any difference; you are not married properly until you give your in-laws a forest antelope. If you don't like your village wedding, don't give the antelope."

And so, everyone agreed, a village wedding was great fun, but "*bule*"—empty. It was completely empty, completely and absolutely. With that they laughed loudly and slapped one another on the back, and forgot all about it.

12

Village Initiations and Magic

OF ALL THE WAYS in which the villagers attempt to assert some C 881
kind of control over the BaMbuti, the one which is the most signifi- 563
cant, and which they consider to be the most effective and binding, P 881
is that of subjecting Pygmy boys to the village initiation, known as 177
the nkumbi. This is one custom which, at first glance, does not seem to have any counterpart in the forest life of the Pygmies. Most outside observers have assumed that the very fact of the Pygmies' participation in the nkumbi—with the absence of any such rites of their own—is a sign of their dependence on the village. Some go so far as to say that this participation shows that the Pygmies are devoid of

C 881 563 any culture of their own. If the facts were what they seem to be these observations might hold water, but the real facts are very different.

P 881 177 [114] During my visit to Epulu in 1954, I had the good fortune to stumble quite accidentally upon fresh information, which almost completely reverses the picture. At that time I was present at an nkumbi, which I have already mentioned briefly in Chapter 1, but which merits more detailed description.

C 881 769 Three years had then elapsed since the previous nkumbi, in 1951, and it was time for another. The purpose of the ceremony is not only to fit village boys for adult life, making them full members of the tribe, but also to ensure the continuity between the past, present and future life of the tribe; between the living and the dead. To the villagers the dead, the ancestors, are just as important as the living, and in many ways more so; and only those who are initiated will join the ancestors when they die. Just as it is important to have a thriving, populous tribe of the living, so is it important to have a thriving, populous tribe of the dead. The dead are, in fact, living—but in another world. Regular initiations are essential to ensure the continued growth of that far-off tribe of ancestors. I have even seen a young boy who had been due to enter the nkumbi but who died just before it took place, circumcised and accorded full initiation rites before burial, just as though he were alive. In this way he was able to go to join his fathers.

C 881 P 881 177 C [626] C [186] P C [608] In 1954 there was a unique situation. There was only one village boy of the right age for initiation (usually between the ages of eight and twelve in this area), and his father was a Christian who refused to allow the boy to participate. Every pressure was brought on the family, but to no avail. There were eight Pygmy boys of suitable age, and normally there would have been at least as many villagers. They would all have been initiated together but in such a way as to make clear the inferior status of the Pygmies. One of the initial acts is the circumcision of the boys, and a Pygmy boy is sent first "to clean the knife."

the knife." Then follows a village boy, and these two are bound to- C 881
gether by an indissoluble bond, the bond of *kare* blood-brotherhood. 608
They are mutually obligated to help and care for each other for the P 881
rest of their lives. This of course helps to reinforce practical and eco- 177
nomic links between the two people, as a Pygmy theoretically would 608
be unable to refuse meat to his kare and the kare could not refuse
any demand for plantains, manioc or rice.

But this year the villagers were faced with the alternative of hav- C
ing no initiation at all, or having one for Pygmy boys alone. As the 881
initiation of a Pygmy gives him only partial rights, since he is not 563 P
a full member of the tribe, a Pygmy initiate can never take a leading 881
part in the nkumbi; all the cutting and all the formal teaching, and 177
certainly all the ritual acts, can be performed only by a qualified vil-
lager. So it meant that the villagers would have to go through all the C
work and expense purely for the Pygmies. There could be no ques- [769]
tion of not holding the nkumbi, as this would offend the ancestors.
And in any case the villagers decided it was worth while as it helped
to assert their authority over the Pygmies. I heard speculative talk C [186]
more than once about how an initiated Pygmy, when he dies, goes [769]
to serve the tribal ancestors just as he served the villagers during his
life.

The *makata* sticks were cut and brought out. These are a series of C 881
sticks used only at the time of the nkumbi; each one is cut to a dif- 534
ferent length and tuned to a definite pitch. Some eight or nine men, 533
each with a stick under his left arm, tapping it with a shorter stick [535]
held in the right hand, dance around the village playing a compli- P 881
cated but tuneful rhythm, the different notes overlapping and com- 177
bining. Villagers from the surrounding area congregated at Epulu,
some of them from as far as fifty miles away, and dancing and feast-
ing went on for over a week. During that time the boys were col- C
lected together, and last-minute appeals were made for young 881 P
Yusefu, the Christian boy, to be allowed to join. His father settled 881 177

C 881 P 881

the matter by sending him to a mission school the far side of Mambasa.

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C 881 P 881 177 157

The boys were not all cut on the same day, but over a period of two weeks. Akobo, the youngest son of Masisi, was the first to be cut, and with him went Masoudi, nephew of Ekianga. They were, at ten or eleven years of age, as brave as any adult, but they were tough children. It was different with little Sansiwake, one of Cephu's nephews. Sansiwake was one of the most beautiful children imaginable, and as beautiful and gentle in character as he was in appearance. He was soft-spoken, and had a voice as musical as his name. His eyes were the dark melting eyes of the *boloko* antelope, as sensitive and as trusting. On this occasion they were as frightened as those of a young animal caught in a hunting net, struggling for its life. His body was as graceful and as delicate as that of a fawn, and his thoughts were only thoughts of kindness, of concern and love for his mother, Tamasa, whose face was eaten away by yaws, and for his father, Aberi, who was hideously ugly and who constantly brought ridicule on himself and his family.

C 881 P 881 177 [152] [302]

C [292] [302] [301]

Sansiwake was the only boy to cry when being taken away from his home. He cried not only for himself, but because his mother was crying bitterly at being parted from her son who was as much a man to her as her husband. Sansiwake was brought to the village, and his head was shaved as the first of a series of ritual acts symbolizing the casting off of an old life. Then Sabani appeared, dressed and painted in a terrifying manner, to smell out his next victim. His face was covered with a mask, his body was daubed with white clay, and his arms and legs were bound with great bundles of raffia so that as he danced he looked half animal and half bird. With him were a number of nkumbi drummers, beating a wild and ear-shattering tattoo, driving all women and uninitiated children into their houses, where they locked and barred the doors. Only little Sansiwake was left outside.

VILLAGE INITIATION AND MAGIC

After Sabani had danced around him, with the drums getting C 881
louder and louder, he was picked up and carried by a villager to the P
stream where the cutting was to take place. Some boys were cut in 881 177
the initiation camp, others in the center of the village, and some in
the stream; it depended largely on the whim of the moment. In the
camp there was a scaffold on which the other boys sat while the
doctor cut, but down in the stream, a short distance into the forest,
Sansiwake had to stand on the rocks, the cold water splashing over
his feet. He was held by the arms and legs so that he would not be
able to struggle, and his considerate uncle, Masalito, clapped a hand
over his mouth so that his screams would not bring him disgrace in
the eyes of the villagers. But Sansiwake could not stand the pain; P
perhaps Sabani was drunk and cut badly. Sansiwake bit Masalito and [152]
then screamed his head off, struggling until he almost broke loose.
Two days later, when he was just beginning to recover, it was decided
that he would have to be cut again, as Sabani had not done as he
should. Shortly afterward the weakened and thoroughly dejected boy P
went down with pneumonia, and would have died if the Pygmies had [164]
not broken all the rules of the initiation camp and kept him warm [758]
and well fed.

He was the only one to suffer any ill effects, and his behavior C 881
would have brought him lasting disgrace had he been a villager. The 152
Pygmies, however, showed only consideration and sympathy for San- 577 866
siwake, and criticized the villagers openly for their unnecessary care- P
lessness and brutality. The villagers retorted that Sansiwake's illness 881 152
was only the penalty for his not having behaved himself properly. 866 177

From the moment the boys enter the camp they are meant to stand C
on their own feet without any help from their relatives, but the older [753]
brothers and fathers of the Pygmy boys were constantly comforting C 881
and encouraging them, at the risk of being ridiculed themselves. 866
Masalito, in particular, was not afraid of being sneered at by the vil- P 881
lagers. One boy, Kaoya, who was cut in the camp, was beaten as he 866 177

866 881 made his way painfully to join the other boys, all sitting in a line on
P 881 logs. Immediately after being cut they are made to sit down and join
866 the others in singing one of the many work songs they will have to
177 learn during the coming months. This takes their mind off the pain,
P C which is all the more considerable because after the operation the
[533] wound is wrapped in a leaf containing a native medicine that is full
[757] of salt. Kaoya was very roughly handled, and Masalito ran up to him
and put his arms around him, hugging him tight to give him
strength. The villagers howled with laughter, but Masalito was more
concerned with Kaoyo than with them.

C Not long afterward the boys were made to dance, and then put to
881 362 rest on a special bed made of split logs, laid side by side on a rough
346 frame that kept them two feet or so off the ground. The boys lay
513 P face downward along the length of the logs, their heads resting on
881 177 pillows made of plantain leaves. Over the bed there was a rough
shelter, sloping down to the ground behind, but open all along the
C [824] front and on two sides. From the roof was hung a sacred banana,
[778] which initiates and instructors would set swinging as an understood
command for the boys to start singing. The boys were forbidden to
touch the banana, being told they would die if they did.

C There were all sorts of other taboos, or restrictions. To get wet,
881 particularly by being outside when it rained, was sure to bring
P 881 death. To eat certain foods was strictly prohibited. The boys had to
177 eat without using their hands directly, spearing the food with sticks.
C P They were forbidden to eat with their initiated relatives. The sound
[264] of the bull-roarer, a piece of wood that makes a strange whirring
[534] noise when spun around on the end of a cord, was meant to be the
[776] voice of a forest demon, and the boys had to show due respect and
terror when they heard it.

During the daytime, when the villagers were present, either as instructors or just as visitors, the boys adhered faithfully to all these and many other rules. By their own rules, however, the villagers were not allowed to sleep in the camp at night. Only the "fathers," that being understood to mean the real fathers and the older brothers of the boys, were allowed to sleep in the "place of the nkumbi." That meant, in this case, only Pygmies. The BaMbuti had different notions. Recognizing that I was anxious to be with them right through the whole period of seclusion, they invited me to join them. After all, they said, I was really the father of all the eight boys. In this way I became one of the *baganza,* the people of the initiation.

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The invitation was not intended as a deliberate slight to the villagers; the Pygmies merely thought it would be fun, particularly as they were sure that I would keep them supplied with tobacco and palm wine and other luxuries. From their point of view no harm was being done. From the villagers' point of view, however, this breach of custom was likely to bring disaster not only on me but also on the rest of the baganza. Beyond issuing the gravest warnings, they made no attempt to discourage me and soon came to accept my presence.

So from the first day to the last I was with the nkumbi, day and night; and at night, when all the villagers had left, I learned what the nkumbi really means to the people of the forest. The moment their instructors were gone, and only Pygmies were left, the boys leaped from the bed where they were supposed to be sleeping and joined their fathers around the fire, eating forbidden foods in forbidden company and in a forbidden manner, using their fingers. One boy jumped onto a log and swung his arms around in imitation of someone swinging a bull-roarer, which of course he should never have seen. Others played their favorite game of punch ball with the sacred banana. A shower of rain was an invitation to run outside and wash off all the dirt that had accumulated during the day. The villagers not only forbade the candidates to get wet, even by washing, but they smeared them constantly with white clay, from head to foot, as a sign of their death as children. To the naturally clean Pygmies this was intolerable, and the boys were encouraged by their fathers to

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P 881 177 take the first opportunity to wash it off. When the villagers questioned them in the morning, the boys invariably replied that they had been so cold during the night that they had huddled close together, and the clay had been rubbed off in this way. In fact, the men provided blankets for the boys, keeping themselves warm by lying close to the fires. Kenge and I slept at one end of the shelter, half underneath the log bed; most of the other adults slept outside.

C 881 563 P 881 177 Both the boys and their fathers enjoyed the chance to make fun, in a friendly way, of the villagers, but that was not their sole reason for deliberately breaking all the taboos. They behaved as they did because to them the restrictions were not only meaningless but belonged to a hostile world. The villagers hoped that the nkumbi would place the Pygmies directly under the supernatural authority of the village tribal ancestors; the Pygmies naturally took good care that nothing of the sort should happen, proving it to themselves by this conscious flaunting of custom.

C 881 769 The villagers believed that the initiate, Pygmy or otherwise, is everlastingly bound thereafter by all the laws of the tribe, sacred and secular. He is put into direct relationship with the supernatural, whose representatives on earth are the villagers themselves. If any Pygmy initiate offends a villager, therefore, he is also offending the supernatural—the ancestors—and will be duly punished by them.
C [753] [752] The villagers live in such fear of the supernatural, with its power to bring down on an offender the curses of leprosy, yaws, dysentery and other diseases or to cause him to be injured by a falling tree, that they cannot conceive of any initiate's daring to offend the ancestors. That is why they believe that the nkumbi gives them ultimate control over their ever-troublesome servants who refuse to behave as servants should.

C 881 563 P 881 177 It is not quite so obvious why the Pygmies subject themselves to what they plainly consider an unnecessarily brutal ritual. The trials of the nkumbi candidate only begin with the actual circumcision. Dur-

VILLAGE INITIATION AND MAGIC

During C
the succeeding months—usually two or three now instead of the 881
former six or even twelve—the boys are subjected to one form of 563 866
mild torture after another. The torture is sometimes mental rather 861
than physical. For instance, one boy, whose father refused point P 881
blank to have anything to do with what he called "an empty, savage 177
custom" but allowed his son to enter, was made to ridicule his father 866
almost every daylight hour. The gentle little Sansiwake, who insisted 861
on getting up from the hard wooden bed to rejoin his companions long before he was completely well, was made to pretend that he was big and strong, carrying heavy loads and imitating the performance of acts degrading to any Pygmy, but particularly so to this sensitive child. Each boy was put through some torture of this nature.

The physical ordeals sometimes start out as games but develop into cruel tests of physical endurance. A crouching dance that might be fun for a few minutes becomes agony after half an hour. A mild switching on the underside of the arm with light sticks is of no concern until, after several days, the skin becomes raw. And then the villagers notch the sticks so that they fold over and pinch the skin sharply, often drawing blood. When the boys have become used to being beaten with leafy branches, thorny bushes are substituted.

To the Pygmies this all seems harsh and unnecessary, and as far as their own children are concerned they keep a strict watch over them to see that the villagers do not go to the length that they sometimes do with village children, even if this brings them into some contempt. But to the villager this toughening-up process is essential and does not come naturally in the course of village life. The child has to be fitted for adult life, and this is what the nkumbi sets out to achieve. In a few months a boy becomes a man, tough and strong, physically and mentally. The process is not a pleasant one, but it is the only way in which, under tribal conditions, the goal can be achieved.

The Pygmy can understand and appreciate this, but the very nature of his own nomadic hunting and gathering existence provides

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881 all the toughening up and education that are needed. Children begin
563 climbing trees sometimes before they can walk. Their muscles
866 develop, and they overcome fear in a number of daring tree games.
861 P Adult activities are learned from an early age by observation and
881 imitation, for the Pygmies live an open life. Their life is as open
• 177 866 inside their tiny one-room leaf huts as it is in the middle of a forest
861 clearing, and so the children have no need of the sex instruction
which forms so large a part of the teaching given to village boys during the nkumbi.

P The Pygmies themselves say that the toughening-up effect of the
881 nkumbi is salutary, though they openly deplore and frequently reject
885 its severity. And when this particular nkumbi was over, the change
177 in every one of the eight boys was plain to see. But this is not their major reason for allowing themselves to be subjected to village initiation, nor is there any question of their being subjected by force. They enter the nkumbi voluntarily because they are a proud people. They live necessarily in contact with the villagers and spend a number of weeks every year either in a village or among villagers. The latter regard any adult who is not initiated as a child; he is treated with no more respect, accorded no more privileges, and he cannot take part in any adult activities. By entering the nkumbi the Pygmies prove their adulthood to the villagers the only way they can. When the initiation was over even Sansiwake had the right to enter any adult baraza and take part in the proceedings. This is what the Pygmies want from the nkumbi, and what they get—the status of adults in village eyes.

P There are many things in their behavior to show that the nkumbi
881 means no more than this to them, quite apart from their deliberate
882 lack of respect for the laws of the nkumbi and their irreverence
177 toward everything that is sacred to the villager. When this particular nkumbi was over and everyone returned to the forest, the same boys who had been walking freely among the men of the village, as men, went straight back to their mothers. They became children once more

P 881 882 177 and were accorded none of the privileges of the adult forest Pygmy. Above all, they were not allowed to take part in the singing of the men's molimo songs. They may have become adults in the village, but in the forest they were still children.

C 563 P 177 Far from illustrating the dependence of the Pygmies upon the villagers, the nkumbi illustrates better than anything else the complete opposition of the forest to the village. The Pygmies in the forest consciously and energetically reject all village values. When they are in the village they temporarily adopt its values and customs, not wanting to desecrate their sacred forest values by bringing them into the village. That is why they never sing their sacred songs in the village the way they do in the forest, and why they refuse to consecrate the nkumbi with special music, although every other event of importance in their lives is marked in this way. There is an unbridgeable gulf between the two worlds of the two peoples.

P 881 885 The Pygmies have their own way of growing naturally into adulthood. A boy proves himself capable of supporting a family when he kills his first real game, and proves himself a man when he participates in the elima.

C 563 P 156 177 During the whole nkumbi there was only one Pygmy who showed the slightest fear of the consequences of the blatant disregard everyone else showed for the laws of the villagers. That was Aberi, father of Sansiwake—Aberi the ugly, Aberi who was so often the laughingstock of his fellows. It was not that he was afraid of the villagers as people, for after his son's illness he often used to walk right among the instructors and drag his Sansiwake away if he felt they were being too severe with him. And he was as outspoken as any against any mistreatment of the children by the villagers. He particularly criticized Sabani for causing his son's illness. Sabani and the other instructors told Aberi it was a terrible thing to do to criticize the nkumbi doctor.

Not long afterward Aberi became ill. He was so ill that he could 000

Not long afterward
P Aberi became ill. He was so ill that he could
156 177 not leave the initiation camp, and he slept on the wooden initiation
753 bed beside the boys, moaning and tossing in his fever. When he re-
754 C covered he said that he had been bewitched, that the villagers were
754 trying to kill him. He even attacked his brother Masalito for having
broken just about every rule in the book.

P The Pygmies practice no sorcery or witchcraft, but they know it
177 is rife among their neighbors and they have seen enough of it in ac-
754 C tion to be uneasy about it. Aberi was one of the few who really
563 believed in it, and who knew what real fear was. He knew fear not
754 only of being bewitched, but of being accused of witchcraft; for his wife, Tamasa, the kindly woman disfigured with yaws, was frequently accused by the villagers. The villagers felt that anyone cursed with such a dreadful deformity must be evil. On several occasions I heard Pygmies accuse old Sau, the mother of Amabosu the young singer, of being a witch. But although they used the village word, it had a different meaning. They were merely accusing her of making trouble. They sometimes said the same thing of other old people who were, as old Pygmies often are, strong-minded and obstinate.

The villagers, however, believe that one can be possessed of a substance which gives one supernatural powers and compels the use of them to harm others. Sometimes it works in such a way that the witch may not even be aware of what he or she is doing, and various forms of divination are used to test suspects. The only time the Pygmies think seriously about witchcraft is when they are in the village, or when villagers visit them in the forest. A single villager visiting a forest hunting camp can bring his evil with him, but when he departs it departs with him.

P It was curious that Aberi, the one who feared this evil most,
177 159 should apparently die by it. He used to tell a story of how one night
754 in the village he had been going to the latrine when he was caught
C 563 from behind, as if by a hand clutching at his shoulder. But there was
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3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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nobody there. He struggled and wrestled but could not escape, and eventually he was thrown onto the ground. He suffered violent dysentery from that time on. But in spite of this illness, Aberi was still strong and healthy enough to be one of the most energetic, if not one of the most successful hunters. And so when he fell ill during a visit to the village, some time after the elima had ended, nobody thought much about it—except Aberi. He claimed that he had been bewitched, and he knew why. He said that many months ago he and two other Pygmies had promised a villager from the BaNgwana village of Dar es Salaam that they would give him a lot of meat if he let them have a sack of rice. The villager, unwisely, gave them the rice but never got the meat. After several attempts to get his due he cursed all three with a powerful curse, and it was this curse, Aberi said, that was killing him. This villager not only possessed the witchcraft substance, but he knew it and used it deliberately. He was a sorcerer. Nobody believed Aberi, however, and slowly he got better.

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One evening I met him wandering up the path leading from Cephu's tiny camp to our own, and I asked him how he was, saying that it was good to see him walking again. He often wore a dismal, dejected look, but this time his face was completely empty of any expression whatsoever. It was frightening to see a face normally full of one emotion or another so void. Even his ugliness had deserted him, and in its place there was just nothing. Aberi said, slowly and carefully, that his body was better but he was going to die because he had been cursed, and for that there was no cure. He spent a short while in our camp, and we all tried to cheer him up. He seemed to brighten after a little singing, and when he left us he was almost cheerful.

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Early in the morning, while it was still dark, I was awakened by an outburst of the most terrible wailing and crying, and I knew what it meant without asking the ash-gray Kenge, who came pounding at my door. I went outside, and in the dim light I saw Pygmies all over

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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177 the place, standing in the doors of their huts, listening. One after
159 another said, "Aberi is dead, completely dead."
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763 Apparently he had gone back to his camp, and Tamasa had given
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563 him a little hot broth to warm him up, as he complained of being
754 cold. He had gone to sleep, but later, quite suddenly and without
any warning, he had awakened with a start, struggling violently as
though trying to get up. But some unseen power was clutching at his
shoulder, and Aberi gave a loud cry and fell back dead. Within a
matter of weeks both the other Pygmies who had been cursed with
Aberi had also died, under similar circumstances.

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177 If the Pygmies had believed in witchcraft, such a terrible series
754 of coincidences would certainly have brought forth an accusation. As
C it was they never even mentioned any possibility other than that the
563 villager might have used poison. This could have been true in Aberi's
754 case—but in all three? The Pygmies shook their heads and said
nothing.

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177 Aberi was buried the following afternoon, with villagers officiat-
764 ing. Sansiwake was almost beside himself with grief, and Tamasa
C had to be dragged bodily away from the grave. When the women
563 had all left, the villagers started their usual inquiry into the death, to
761 see who was responsible. They did not mention their fellow villager
764 from Dar es Salaam, the one who had cursed Aberi; instead they
(754) named Tamasa. Kelemoke and Masalito, who had their arms around
Sansiwake and were trying to comfort him, turned and looked at the
accusers. Kelemoke spoke for them both. He said, quietly, but with
considerable feeling, "Tamasa is our sister, Tamasa is our mother.
We do not kill our own kind."

Without waiting for the villagers to finish their formalities, the Pygmies all returned to their camps and began preparing to leave the village and go back to the forest, where such things do not happen.

C 574 this was not the point, and he finally just rolled over in his blanket,
P 115 muttering that sometimes he thought Europeans were as crazy as
123 villagers.

For the next few days we visited Kachui's plantations and talked with such Pygmies as we found there. But it was impossible to shake off the chief's sons, who stuck to us like leeches. As a result I could get no response at all; everything that the Pygmies said was said to impress the villagers. The only useful information was obtained by Kenge, who got into the habit of slipping away while I was "holding court," as he called it, and talking to his fellow Pygmies well out of earshot.

C 563 One thing was plain, however, and that was that no matter how
P powerful Kachui was—and it was certainly within his power to have
177 any Pygmies put in jail and flogged—he was no match for the people
184 of the forest. Kenge learned that the main group had been away for over six months and had no intention of returning yet. They were a long way off and came close to the village only when they wanted to raid the plantations. Even while we were there Kachui's sons tried to find out where the rest of the Pygmies were, but everyone protested complete ignorance.

C A few days at Bafwakoa were more than enough. With Kachui
648 lying in wait the Pygmies were not likely to tell us where their
186 companions were, and even if they did Kachui was not likely to let
622 us out of sight. He became un-co-operative when I asked to look at
563 the tribunal records, for which I had official permission. He was
123 P forced into admitting that he did not consider the Pygmies real peo-
123 ple, and therefore they had no right to have cases tried in the tri-
C bunal. He said that any complaints by the villagers against Pygmies
692 were heard by him; he judged them himself and no records were
kept. He made it quite plain that the judgment always went in favor of the villager. Kenge then disgraced himself by asking what happened if a Pygmy brought a complaint against a villager. Kachui

C 648 186 623 563 123

answered abruptly, "Pygmies have no right to complain." It was obviously time to go elsewhere.

On leaving Bafwakoa we headed down a little track that led to the banks of the Ituri River. Across the river lay the territory of the BoMbo and BaBali tribes, both with unsavory reputations for cannibalism, among other things. C 131 133 The ferry was waiting on our side of the river—a series of huge canoes, each about thirty feet long, C 501 held together by a platform lashed across the center, just wide enough and long enough to take a truck or two small cars.

The men who operated the ferry were BaNdaka, and they came lazily down to the river from their village. They climbed into the ends of their canoes and cast off, each taking hold of a long stout pole. As we drifted out, the leader took his pole and struck it on the bottom of his canoe. It sounded like a great signal drum being beaten, and the echo rolled up and down the river with the force of thunder. The other men imitated their leader, then began poling slowly across, singing and chanting. P C 133 The river at that point must be nearly a mile across, thickly forested down to the water's edge on each bank. It was vast and lonely. About an hour's walk from the far side is the spot where Stanley stood and watched the confluence of the two waterways, the Ituri and the Lenda, and remarked that this was one of the most beautiful sights in the whole of the Dark Continent. We went and stood on the same spot as the sun was setting, and I felt that this indeed was the heart of Africa.

C 563 P 177 184 Our stay among the BoMbo and BaBali was not much more fruitful than that with Kachui from the point of view of meeting or learning anything about the local Pygmies. The chiefs, Isiaka and Lukamba, both had the same complaints to make—they simply could not control their Pygmies.

C 186 "How can we control them?" Isiaka said. "It is their forest, and they can hide from us whenever they want to. They are worthless people. They only come to the village when they want to steal."

C 563 P 177 184 C [186] We did meet some Pygmies, however, and they laughed and told us that no Pygmy would ever come near Isiaka; there were plenty of other villagers who gave them much more in return for their meat, while Isiaka always expected them to work on his plantations for nothing. This, in fact, was the picture we got wherever we stopped. The villagers throughout the forest complained bitterly about the Pygmies, saying, "They eat us up until we are ready to die"—meaning that the Pygmies take from them but give little in return.

P C 177 439 C 829 It was not until we reached the western limits of the forest and turned north that we really had any luck. Some miles east of Wamba we left the car and followed a track through the forest. At the end of a full day we arrived at a series of old established villages of the Mabudo tribe. These people had a much more realistic attitude toward the Pygmies and consequently got along much better with them. They talked freely and willingly. They said that, after all, the Pygmies had been in the forest long before the Mabudo arrived, so they had the right to live as they wished. If they preferred to stay in the forest and live like animals, that was their concern, but if they wanted to come to the villages and work for the Mabudo, that was fine. At the time of harvest the villagers all gave gifts of the first fruits to the local Pygmies, because, as they said, it was their land. And any time the Pygmies were near a Mabudo village they invariably brought in gifts of meat or honey.

P 123 There were a few Pygmies in one of the villages when we arrived, and after a couple of days they agreed to take us out to one of the hunting camps. Kenge had done some talking to them on the side, assuring them that I was not really like a villager, but just like them, a "*miki nde ndura*"—son of the forest. When he introduced me to them he proudly pointed to the marks on my forehead that proclaimed me an adult. "The villagers call him Mulefu, because he is

For the next few days we stayed there, and then we moved on 114
from camp to camp, visiting the six or seven hunting groups in the 484
neighborhood. Toward the end we found that we were only a day's march away from Kaweki's fishing camp, and another day would have put us at the Epulu River. So we turned about and slowly made our way back.

Once we had become known to the first group we were accepted 609
wherever we went as a matter of course. Kenge, who had been extremely 484
shy and rather nervous in the Mabudo villages, refusing to eat the food they offered him, was once more his old self. He exploited to the utmost what was for him as well as for our hosts a novel situation. Generally Pygmies travel only within their own area and among groups that they know and in which they have relatives. There was a great deal of curiosity on both sides, but it was mainly concerned with the villagers—what kind of people they were and how easily they were tricked. The Pygmies that we spent the most time with in this region visited the villages only rarely, some of them had never seen a European before, and none of them had met a Pygmy from the other side of the forest. They examined both of
us with attention. They pitied me for my height, which made me 609
so clumsy, and they laughed at the hair on my arms and legs, which 123
they said was like that of a monkey. A pink face poking out from 186
behind a beard added to the similarity, and it became a standard 826 [825]
joke among them, much to Kenge's annoyance. He felt that it lowered his own status.

For me the trip was mainly work—visiting different groups and 609
taking copious notes about each. But for Kenge it was an experience 177 [114]
beyond all imagination. Not only was he able to meet other groups of his fellow BaMbuti, and many different tribes of villagers, but he saw different kinds of Europeans—missionaries, businessmen, moviemakers, "white hunters," and others. We visited the town of Paulis; it was only a small town, but the biggest that Kenge had seen, and

P 609 177 it had a railway, which aroused his deepest curiosity. He could not
think why the trains were limited in their movement by the iron
P [822] rails, and could not turn wherever they wanted to. There was something
about this restriction of freedom that bothered him. I took him
to see a football match between the workers of a local brewery and those of a large combine store. Just before the match we had been drinking palm wine in a small African bar, and found it much stronger than the wine made in the forest. So Kenge rooted happily for what he called "Men of the Beer," but why people should spend the afternoon kicking a ball back and forth was as puzzling to him as were the captive trains.

C 609 648 574 [754] We spent only a few days in Paulis, branching out from there
along the northern limits of the forest. Then we turned eastward and
made our way across and down into Lese country. The BaLese are
considered to be arch-sorcerers and witches, and it was with great
P 177 648 reluctance that Kenge agreed to stay in the village of Chief Lupao,
near Nduye. It was several miles off the road, and by accident or
design it was empty when we got there. Fires were still smoldering and smoking, but there was no other sign of life. The chief's baraza, a huge edifice with a thatched roof, stood open in front of his house; the fire had been recently made up, but nobody came out to greet us.

Kenge was getting more and more nervous, and I was on the point of giving in to his repeated requests to leave and find a more hospitable place to stay, when a young man appeared and wandered idly toward us. He stopped some way off and stood there looking at
C [184] us. This was a completely new situation to me, as in every other
village, even where we had been total strangers, we had been almost embarrassed by the hospitality of the people. I waited to see if the man's curiosity would get the better of him, but after a while I gave up and went over to talk to him. Kenge refused to move from the safety of the car, and stood there with his hand on the door, ready to lock himself inside at a moment's notice. For him this was a

For him this was a foreign world indeed, for these were not only villagers, but villagers who had a name for devouring corpses. C 609 648 574 [266] P 177 648

I made little headway with the young man, who continued to chew on a stick while he avoided giving any direct answers to my queries as to where Chief Lupao was. He questioned me in turn, and when I had assured him that I was not a missionary, or a government agent, or a plantation owner looking for forced labor, he wandered away—still chewing. He called back over his shoulder that he would try and find his father, the chief. Kenge was speechless with indignation because we had not been invited into the baraza or offered water to wash with. He said that even villagers did that much for strangers, however unwelcome. He was more unhappy than ever.

Eventually Lupao's son returned and said that his father would be back soon from his plantation, and we could sit down in the baraza if we wanted to. With that he walked away and once more we were alone. By now it was too late to think of going anywhere else, so we entered the baraza and sat down on a couple of logs near the fire. After an hour a small crowd of old men and children had gathered around and were staring at us silently and speculatively. Any time either of us tried to talk with them they just shook their heads. Kenge was beginning to be more impatient than afraid, and he demanded that someone go and fetch water for us to wash with, asking the bystanders what kind of savages they were to let their guests stay unwashed and unfed. The chief's son looked at Kenge coldly and asked him what tribe he belonged to. Kenge replied without hesitation that he was not of the village, but of the forest—he was a Pygmy. The young man nodded and said, "So I see!" And still no move was made to fetch us any water.

Just then Chief Lupao came out of his house. An extremely surly and untidy old man, he did not try to disguise the fact that he had been sleeping, and not in his plantation. He greeted us in an offhand way and asked what we wanted. I explained that we wanted C 622 574 186

C
622 to go into the forest to visit some of his Pygmies and had come to
574 pay our respects first. He said brusquely that he did not know
186 where any Pygmies were to be found. Then he looked at Kenge
[829] and asked him if it was usual for a Pygmy to sit beside a white man.
C Kenge countered by asking if it was usual for a big chief to keep a
622 white man waiting while he slept, and to leave him sitting on a log
574 without so much as a glass of water to drink or to wash with. At
186 P that the other villagers began joining in, and feeling more than un-
• 177 comfortable at being made the center of a fight between them and
186 Kenge, I told Lupao that we were very tired, and asked if it would
829 be all right for us to stay the night in his village. Lupao, who by
then was engrossed with a steaming bowl of chicken soup, said he
supposed so, and indicated with a nod of his head for his son to go
and find us a place to sleep.

I made a few more attempts at polite conversation but did not get so much as a look in response. Everyone was silent, staring either at us or up at the smoky roof above us. It had been quite dark for some time, and after waiting to see if the son was going to do anything about sleeping quarters, I got up and said loudly to Kenge that I was going to sleep in the car and asked if he was going to do the same. He replied that he would sleep outside to guard me from the thieves and murderers that made up the entire population of the village. This was putting it a little more strongly than I had intended, and we had now given real cause for offense. As we left there was a stony silence. Lupao refused to look up and allow me to take my leave of him. I can hardly blame him, but the tradition of hospitality among most African villagers is so strong that one comes to accept it and to expect it, and the behavior of the BaLese was very unusual.

When Lupao saw that we were really leaving in such an unceremonious huff, he called his son, who had remained in the baraza all the time, and sent him running after us to tell us that a house would

be ready soon. Kenge replied that the car was clean, which was a C 622
little too subtle for the young man. He returned half an hour later 574 186
with some food, and this time Kenge was more direct. He lowered P
the window of the car enough to say, "We people of the forest don't 177 186
eat excrement!" and then hurriedly wound it up. We passed an uneasy 829
night, and in the first glimmer of morning, without as much as looking for a stream to wash in, we left. Nobody even came to watch us go.

We were so exhausted that we decided to call on the Catholic mission C 797
at Nduye and at least get cleaned up. We drove through the 177
little village, and on the outskirts turned onto a steep stone track P 177
that wound up the hillside. It climbed erratically past a temporary church, near which rough-hewn stones were being assembled for the building of a more permanent structure, and onto a ledge just wide enough to hold the long, low mission house and a neat terrace in front, where the ground dropped away sharply.

The welcome we got there was very different. A huge, bearded figure in white robes came striding up the hill after us, shouting instructions in KiNgwana to cook another half dozen eggs. To us he said, "You are late for breakfast." And after a second look, "You need hot baths."

Father Longo would not hear of our going anywhere else and insisted that we stay for at least a week, a month if we liked. There was plenty of work we could do and we looked as though we needed to go to church. Then he asked me if we were Catholics. When I replied that I was a not very good Protestant and that Kenge was a practicing heathen, he roared with laughter and said that at least Kenge didn't know what a mistake he had made. His good humor put Kenge immediately at ease, and there was only a momentary flicker of doubt when Father Longo called for his Lese catechist to show Kenge where he could wash, eat and sleep. Shortly afterward I heard him in the distance, telling his new companions in his loudest

C 797 177 P 179 and most boastful voice of what a terrible experience we had been through the night before. Meanwhile, I found myself in the company of the kindest, wisest, and most sincere person I had met in this part of Africa.

After he had seen that I did justice to an enormous breakfast he took me down to look at the new church he was building. Moslems and pagans worked side by side with Christians, breaking rocks on the mountainside, carrying them to the site, squaring them and heaving them into place. All this help was voluntary; Father Longo paid the workers whenever he was able, which was all that was expected. It was done willingly because over the years the people of the surrounding villages had come to know Father Longo for the man he was. He was not concerned simply with adding a lot of names to his roll of converts but primarily with living a life that would be an example that others would want to follow. He made everyone equally welcome at his mission, regardless of religion. Some months later, when the new church was finished, it was consecrated at a service made all the more beautiful by dozens of his Pygmy friends, who came in from the forest carrying gifts of forest fruits and flowers and danced their pagan way up the aisle. They were filled with as much joy and devotion as Father Longo himself.

P 114 C 184 609 We came to know the Pygmies in the neighborhood of Nduye well, but in spite of our initial setback with Chief Lupao we still wanted to make some contact with the BaLese. Father Longo suggested that we try the other powerful Lese chief, Nakubai, whose village was a number of miles to the north. We followed his advice, and Nakubai did everything he could to reverse our opinion of his people. He was not only hospitable, but he understood when I said that we wanted to visit his Pygmies without the restraint of having a villager along with us. Whereas Kachui and others had insisted on keeping us under constant surveillance, Nakubai even said that we would probably see far more if we went on our own. As a result we

491 middle to get a better view of the way the supporting lianas were fastened, he urged me on, saying that it was not natural to be standing there in the middle of the air over a dangerous river.

114 On the far side we came to a camp, and there we found some relatives of the Epulu Pygmies, including one girl who was well known to us both—Makubasi's first wife.

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177 We stayed there for the night and then moved on up a trail that led to the Protestant mission of Biasiku. This was headed by an American missionary, the Reverend Charles Bell, and his wife. They had been in the Ituri for about as long as Father Longo and Pat Putnam had. As soon as they heard that we were staying in the camp down by the river they made arrangements for us to stay at the mission, and without knowing that we were on our way Mr. Bell set out on foot to issue the invitation in person. I had a special reason for accepting it; I wanted Kenge to have a fair notion of the way different missions operated. I certainly had no desire to see him converted, but having given him a taste of missions it seemed fair that he should have an all-round picture, and earlier during our trip we had had an unfortunate experience with a different Protestant mission.

At that mission prayers were said in public about five times a day, mention always being made of any converts who might be ill, however slightly. Prayers were also made requesting the Almighty to provide a road into the forest so that the mission could have easier access to the Pygmies, and thanks were offered for a new automobile that had been acquired. All this was perfectly understandable to the villagers, with their own tradition of witchcraft. They merely thought this a particularly powerful form of magic. Kenge was skeptical. "How is their god going to put a road into the forest when the white man can't do it?" he asked.

But one day, while we were there, a wounded Pygmy was brought in. He had been gored while hunting and was groaning with pain.

The missionary and I were sitting outside at the time, going through 797
his morning ritual of drinking tea. I went over to see what had hap- 177
pened, and to ask if they wanted any medicine. They said no, but they would like something to make the pain go away until they could prepare their own medicine. All I had was aspirin, but in any case I had more faith in their powers of healing than in mine. Kenge asked in a whisper why the missionary had not come over, but was continuing to sip his tea, keeping his back to us. I did not know, and I said nothing until after the next prayer meeting. As usual, prayers were offered for all those converts who had minor ailments, and for the new road, but not a word was said about the injured Pygmy, lying in a hut not more than ten yards away. Then I did ask, and I was told, "Why should I pray for him? He is not a Christian." The Pygmies were all standing around, and heard, as they were meant to hear. They had little idea of what Christianity was, but from that moment I doubt if any of them thought that it had much to offer them.

At the end of our stay there, the missionary asked Kenge what he thought of the Christian God now that he had been privileged to live in a Christian community. Kenge said with his usual frankness, "It is the biggest falsehood I know." And so I was glad for Kenge to meet other Christians who had a better idea of what their religion stood for, and the Bells were certainly such.

It was while we were with them that Kenge first began to realize 823
that there really was another world, beyond the forest. He had often heard people talk about it, and up at Paulis the forest was thinned almost to mere savannah; but nowhere had he really seen beyond the forest. The mission was built on a high hill, cleared of vegetation so that crops could be planted to supply the mission school and hospital with food. Usually the distant horizons were hazy, and everywhere we looked down only on a sea of trees. Several times I tried to tell Kenge that beyond this lay another world, a world of lakes and mountains and open plains, but he just nodded disbelievingly. He

Our last stop was outside Mambasa, where the local administrator 648
in a fit of well-meaning but not very far-seeing zeal was "liberating" 177
the Pygmies from the villagers. He did this by cutting down clear- 361
ings along the roadside and setting up villages for the Pygmies to live in, so that they could cultivate plantations that would provide additional crops for the government to collect and market. Kenge was immensely amused at the thought of being liberated. He said the Pygmies would still go to the Negro villages. Why should they work on their own plantations when they could steal from real villagers?

We accompanied the administrator, a fat and jovial man, hospitable and friendly, who genuinely liked the Pygmies. But he could not be made to believe that what he was doing was wrong. He had called various groups of Pygmies down to the clearings and talked to each group, explaining that the government would supply them with all the necessary tools for cultivation and give them the seeds to plant. In time, each Pygmy village would have a baraza, like the Negro villages, and a schoolhouse, and the important ones would have their own dispensaries. He then asked in a democratic way if they wanted to come and join the plan. They all shouted yes, to a man, and the administrator turned to me with a victorious smile of pride. He then commanded the villagers he had brought with him to distribute beans to each Pygmy, with instructions as to how and where to plant them. The Pygmies all lined up, and as soon as each had received his share he rejoined the end of the line. When they were caught out and taken off the line to their allotments to plant the beans, they listened gravely and began to work. Half an hour later most of the beans were being cooked for lunch.

The plan was doomed to failure for several reasons. For one, the 648
Pygmies are not able to stand the direct sunlight and become ill out- 177
side the shade of the forest. They also become ill because they have 361
no resistance, as the villagers have, to the kinds of disease they are 147
open to in a sedentary life. Water which the villager can drink with 164

648 361 177 impunity gives severe stomach disorder to the Pygmy, who is used
147 to the fresh clean water of forest streams. Flies and mosquitoes carry
164 germs unknown to him in his natural home. But above all, his entire
181 code of behavior and thought is geared to his nomadic forest life:
177 to bring him to a settled life in a village is to ask him overnight to
361 782 abandon one way of life, a way he has lived for thousands of years, and adopt another. Where the Pygmies did make the attempt there was complete moral as well as physical disintegration. Not long ago a Belgian friend from the Congo told me that the day before he had left, on one small "model plantation" where the Pygmies were being liberated, twenty-nine had died in one day from sunstroke.

I spoke about the plan to many Pygmies, and when Kenge got back to Epulu he talked as much about it as about anything else that he had seen on his journey to the outside world. Old Moke summed
829 up the attitude that I had found everywhere. "The forest is our home; when we leave the forest, or when the forest dies, we shall die. We are the people of the forest."

361 camp to hear his stories. But none of his stories fascinated the Pyg-
361 mies as much as those of the model Pygmy villages we had passed
177 on our way home. He was made to repeat these accounts over and over again, giving every detail. While the younger men and women laughed until they could laugh no more at Kenge's description of the distribution of beans for planting, and how most of them ended up in the cooking pot, the older people were less amused. "But are they actually living in those villages?" they asked. And when Kenge answered that some of them were, the next question was "What if there is no game nearby?" Kenge could only tell them what the administrator had said: "You are welcome to hunt so long as you continue to look after the plantations." Everyone knew that to be impossible. Hunting is a full-time occupation, and it could lead a group away for months on end. It called for the co-operation of men, women and children. Who was to stay to look after the fields?

Other questions brought equally unsatisfactory answers, even so far as the younger people were concerned. There were no trees in the "model" villages—every last one had been cut down, exposing the huts to the full heat of the sun. The Pygmies were to be supplied with free seeds to plant, but they would be expected to produce a definite yield, and they knew that villagers who failed to come up to the mark were fined, and if they were unable to pay their fines they
[312] went to jail. Every village had been placed near a supply of fresh water, tested by the administrator himself (by looking at it—he was horrified when I drank some). But the Pygmies knew that however clean it might be to start with, it would soon be polluted; and in any case there was no guarantee that it would continue throughout the year.

361 Far from being "liberated" from the villagers, the Pygmies felt
829 that in these model plantations they would be in greater danger than
177 ever. In the forest they knew that they were safe, because the forest was theirs, but once out in the open they were subject to all the evil

influences of the villagers, particularly witchcraft. The theory was 361
that they would be independent because they would no longer have 829
to rely on the villagers for plantains, rice, peanuts, or other village 177
foods. In point of fact the only thing for which the Pygmies might really be considered to depend on their neighbors was metal for their knife and spear blades. And this was the one thing the model plan for liberation did not teach them to produce or work for themselves.

It may have been coincidence, or it may have been the result of 152
all this talk of Pygmy villages and of the way that elsewhere the 177
178
forest was being cut down by modern machinery to build new roads, 185
to open up new mines, or to cultivate more coffee, but within a few days what had been a happy-go-lucky camp became silent and depressed. The unhappy Pygmies argued that the more the forest was cut down for roads and mines and foreign plantations, the more would have to be cut down to make more plantations to feed all the laborers. It was not a happy outlook for them. Then, as always happened [533]
when they were upset, they began to sing one evening. They sang and sang, and even those who had been sleeping came out to join in.

During a pause between songs, while everyone was silent, we 533
heard quite distinctly the long-drawn-out whistling cry that the 825
Pygmies say comes from the chameleon. There was a shout of delight, and the singing immediately started again, but this time to a quite different tempo. The rhythm was given out by the sharp clapping of two short sticks which Amabosu had quickly cut from a nearby tree. They rang clear and true. The cry of the chameleon and the use of the *ngbengbe* sticks meant only one thing—there was honey nearby. Within a few days there was not a Pygmy left in the village.

Of all the many foods in the forest, honey attracts the Pygmies 222
the most strongly. At all times of the year game is to be caught, different 262
kinds of mushrooms and fruits and nuts and berries are to be

222 gathered, but the forest gives its people honey only during two happy
262 months. It gives with even greater abundance, however, and the honey season is a season for abandoned merry-making, when even the cares of hunting become unimportant, as each individual, young or old, male or female, sets off every morning in quest of this precious gift. Above all, it is a season for rejoicing, for dancing and singing.

222 It is also a season when hunting groups split up into even smaller
621 units, each going its own way, claiming certain honey trees for its own by marking them with a vine tied around the base or with some other sign that they know will be respected by all other Pygmies. Only villagers would be capable of breaking such a trust. And so it
222 is also a time when the Pygmies tell stories for the benefit of the
177 villagers of the dreadful and dangerous spirits that they have to fight in order to get the honey. Naturally enough, then, it is a time when the villagers prefer to leave the Pygmies, and the forest, well alone.

222 Cephu was already off on his own, slyly camping near the valley
621 that divides the territory of the Epulu Pygmies from that of the next group to the west. He had relatives in both groups, and he felt able to claim trees in both territories, depending on where he thought he would do best. Those that were left split into two bands. One set off with Ekianga, far away to the north of Kaweki's fishing camp. There they hoped to combine good hunting with the honey quest.
[439] A few made a permanent halfway camp so that they could act as a convenient relay station between Ekianga and the village, using the surplus meat to obtain luxuries that would help make the season even more festive.

222 Masisi, however, refused to have anything to do with this plan.
621 The honey season was no time to be bothered with hunting, he said,
578 and in any case he was fed up with village food and village tobacco
177 and dirty village water. He wanted to forget about the village and eat nothing but forest food. He decided on an area that was little frequented. There was a great deal of dissension among those who

otherwise would have followed him without question, but Masisi was 222
adamant. He said he was going anyway; whether anyone else came 621
or not did not worry him. His cousin, Manyalibo, was in a quandary. 578
Morally he was bound to support his relative, but he was tempted 177
by Ekianga's idea of getting the best of both worlds. Visions of both
meat and honey won, and he announced that he was going with
Ekianga.

Masisi with the true Pygmy sense of drama said that Manyalibo 222
was a disgrace, and that as everyone else obviously wanted to behave 621
like villagers he would go off on his own. In a loud dramatic voice 578
he commanded his wife to pack her belongings. Within an hour or
so they set off, followed by their two children, Akobo and Ageronga.
There was some discussion after they had left, and Njobo's sister,
Teningbenge, and her son Maipe, decided to follow Masisi. With [734]
them went Masamba, Njobo's wife; Njobo himself was still in Bunia
with his son, Nyange, looking after the boy who was being treated
for severe tuberculosis of the bone. The next to follow them was
old Asofalinda, who said that she wanted nothing to do with her
brother Ekianga. If Ekianga intended to waste his honey season hunting,
he could do so without her. This somewhat counterbalanced
Manyalibo's desertion of Masisi, and everyone thought it a great
idea. She packed her few things together and set off, still denouncing
Ekianga as a fool. She carried her crippled little daughter on her side 734
and her bundle slung over her back. Lizabeti was a pathetic child
whose hip had been diseased since birth. She had never walked but
had spent her ten years of life crawling around on her buttocks, dragging
one withered leg after her, using the other leg and her two
hands to swing her body along as she vainly tried to follow other
children in their games. Mambunia, Masisi's brother, himself with
a leg twisted by infantile paralysis, went limping after Asofalinda,
shouting that he would come and help her carry Lizabeti. As he 621
left, clutching a spear in one hand, he told me that Masisi would

133 [312] rolling hills are separated by perennial streams never more than a few miles apart. A pygmy can find water almost anywhere within a hundred yards.

NEGRO-PYGMY RELATIONS

433 439 361 177 This forest is inhabited by two kinds of people, Negroes and pygmies, who maintain an almost symbiotic relationship, based on trade. A Negro village may own approximately 100 square miles of forest territory. In this territory are the Negro village and the pygmy village. The former is permanent, in a clearing; the latter is temporary, under the forest trees. In maintaining their relationship, it is the pygmies' job to take in honey and meat, while the Negroes' obligation is to give them plantains. In addition, the pygmies may bring in a certain amount of wild baselli fruit in season, or roofing leaves, or rattan and fibers for net making; in return they may acquire ax blades, knives, and arrowheads from the Negroes.

There is no strict process of barter involved, and no accounting kept, other than through general observation. If the pygmies are stingy, their Negroes will hold back their bananas. If the Negroes are stingy, the pygmies will leave the territory and go to live with other pygmies serving other Negro hosts.

608 571 177 This relationship is interfamilial, between a pygmy family and a Negro family. It is a matter of close personal relations, inherited, on both sides, from father to son. These alliances may change from time to time, but when they do there are usually hard feelings; if a man's pygmy leaves him to serve another host it is a kind of divorce. In the old days, a frequent cause of intervillage warfare among the Negroes was the luring away of each other's pygmies.

[P. 323-A]

177 439 648 Before the Belgians stopped intervillage and intertribal warfare, the most important single duty of the pygmy was to act as scout and intelligence agent in the forest. As soon as he became aware of a raiding party crossing the boundary of his host's territory he would hotfoot it to the village to give warning. This eternal vigilance on the part of the pygmy was probably of more value to his hosts than the meat that he brought in. Now that the need of this has ceased he is fulfilling only half of his contract; the Negro, who still provides plantains and manufactured objects, is still fulfilling all of his. Still both are satisfied.

177 439 361 621 648 Ordinarily, the pygmy keeps inside the territory of his Negro hosts. Individuals and small family groups may go outside to visit relatives in other bands, but this causes no disturbance because the visitors turn in their game to the hosts of the kinsmen whom they are visiting. This constant milling about evens up on the whole, and the number of pygmies in any band at any one time is about the same. There are occasions, however, when the hunters of a band may have a strong reason to pass beyond the landmarks which designate their hosts' territorial boundaries. If there is a lot of game just over the border and no pygmies there to catch it, the pygmies will tell their Negroes, who tell the Negroes owning that part of the forest. An agreement will be made between the two groups of Negroes, and the pygmies will be allowed to take the game, provided that they pay a part of it to the owners of the forest, and another part to their own hosts. This kind of economic treaty, therefore, brings the pygmies of a given band into contact with two groups of Negroes, and may initiate new relationships.

177 574 When the pygmy camp is close to the Negro village, some of the pygmies

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177 574 [276] may come in every evening. They will leave a couple of old men to stay behind in the camp as guards, smoking hashish, and the rest will go into the village, usually around four o'clock in the afternoon, after the day's hunting is over. From then until dark a few pygmies are usually to be seen hanging about the women's quarters. If a white man arrives, however, they quickly disappear, through fear that he will confiscate their antelope, or any other game that they may have brought with them.

[273] These mass visits are made particularly if it is going to be a moonlit night, and if wine drinking is going on. If there is a moon they will stay and dance; if not, they will come home [535] at dark. The Negroes give them wine in a condescending way, and the pygmies put on what the Negroes consider to be wild, barbaric dances.

439 [361] Sometimes the pygmy camp is as much as two days' journey from the village. In this case, the pygmies go in seldom, and browbeat their wives to make them go in to get plantains.

A visitor to a Negro village can nearly always see bunches of plantains lying around on the ground; they have been placed there for the pygmies, who pick them up and carry them home. There is no need for any special bargaining or designation; the pygmies know which bunches are for them.

177 439 571 **Pygmy attitudes toward their Negroes.**—The pygmies consider themselves inseparably attached to their hosts and think it their duty to provide them with meat. Although they feel that they are supposed to turn over all honey and elephant meat, in each case they eat all they can before taking it [251] into the village. They never preserve or store any food. Their duty of feeding the Negroes meat is therefore regarded as somewhat of a nuisance. On the other hand, when the pygmy

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P 177 439 571 [426] wants something from a Negro, he wheedles and "begs" for it. He may thus "borrow" a mortar, a skin-headed drum for dancing, etc., and will not return it until the Negro comes after it or sends for it. He will not put any of these things under cover, or care for them; he leaves them out in the rain to mildew and rot. The owner has to see that his property is cared for, and this forms a subject on which the Negro can make fun of the pygmy.

The form of this relationship is therefore a grudging duty in the case of giving, and a wheedling begging in the case of receiving. These outer forms fail to reveal the inner feeling of loyalty and affection between the parties concerned, but rather symbolize the existing situation in which the Negro is at the top of the scale and the pygmy at the bottom.

Z 186 **Negro attitude toward their pygmies.**—The Negroes distinguish four ranks or orders of living beings: people, pygmies, chimpanzees, and other animals. The pygmies are thus considered a species apart, neither human nor animal, but in between. The main point of distinction lies not in their size or physique, but in the fact that the pygmies do no cultivation.

Z 186 563 581 P 581 The Negroes think of their pygmies as barbaric and uncultured, but at the same time they are often fond of them. A Negro may occasionally marry a pygmy woman, and the children are considered real children, complete human beings; they are brought up with the Negro's other children. The Negroes say that pygmy women are good in bed, cheap, and prolific, but that they are useless for women's work—cultivation and cooking. For a pygmy
Z [595] [522] woman it is a great rise in the scale of
living to marry a Negro as his second
or third wife, despite the fact that pygmy wives are usually the butt of humor from the Negro wives. This is, how-

[P.324-B]

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ever, a one-way process; no Negress could endure the pygmy way of living, and none of them ever marry pygmies.

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The interplay between Negroes and pygmies may be illustrated by a number of examples in which they disagree on historical facts. The Negroes say that the pygmies once went naked, like animals. The pygmies hotly deny this, and assert that they always wore loin cloths. The Negroes admit that they themselves were once cannibals, but say that the pygmies ate more human flesh than they did. This too the pygmies deny; they claim that they never ate human flesh except when the Negroes gave it to them.

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In addition to the exchange of food and, formerly, protection, which form the basis for Negro-pygmy interaction, there is another activity which helps to cement their relationship. The Negroes have a circumcision school, of the usual Negro variety. This school is held about once in four or five years. There is no specific interval; it is probable that they wait until there are enough boys ready to form a class of the right size. These boys are anywhere from nine to fourteen years of age. Now the pygmies associated with these Negroes may send their boys through this same school with the sons of their hosts. Thus, the pygmy boys are away from home several months, are in close association with the Negro boys, and are taught the same secrets that the Negro boys learn. At the end they are all circumcised together, and their parents come to the Negro village to dance and get drunk with the parents of the Negro boys.

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The pygmies are thus age-graded like the Negroes. Each class has its own cheer, or song, as in American colleges. Each class also has its own name, such as "Hurricane" or "great army worm," depending on some event

[P. 325-A]

481 lengths of 20 feet or so each from some flexible liana, and passes the first around the tree trunk, which may be as much as six feet thick. Then he sets the second liana in place in the same manner, and passes the two under his shoulders. He sits parallel to the trunk, which he faces, and grips with his feet. While bracing against one liana, he moves the other upward, then braces on it while moving the other. In this way he can climb up the slick, limbless bole of the tree, to where the first limbs branch off, some hundred or more feet above the ground.

When he reaches the first branches, he takes off his lianas and walks along the limbs like a tightrope walker or structural steel worker, free of the limbs, with nothing to hold in his hands. When he has accomplished his mission he comes down again the way he went up.

PYGMY TECHNOLOGY

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Basic tools.—The keynote to the simple and specialized pygmy technology is the fact that they do not have to make any of their basic tools, but instead obtain effective iron cutting tools from their Negro hosts. This eliminates much work and the need for much skill in toolmaking, and provides them with more efficient instruments than they could possibly make for themselves at a food-gathering level of technology.

When a pygmy needs an ax he will beg one from his Negro host. Perhaps the Negro will give him a whole ax, haft and all. The blade is a triangular piece of iron, made locally by Negro smiths, and set in a solid wooden handle, adzed out of a larger piece of wood. The handle has a hole which has been burned through it from side to side with a hot iron. Through this

[P 326-A]

412 [177] [439] hole goes the narrow end of the ax. This is essentially a Neolithic type of hafting.

[313] Perhaps the Negro will give him only the ax head, without a haft. In this case the pygmy will cut down a thin sapling, or a tree branch, just the right thickness, and use it bark and all. [284] He splits this with his knife, at one end. Then he wraps the split and the blade which he has thrust through it with twine or rattan. The pygmy will use the Negro-hafted ax on the ground, but if he is climbing a tree and needs an ax while up there, he will take along one of his own hafting by preference, because it is lighter.

Both men and women use these axes. The women also have knives of their own, of the same manufacture. These knives are about six inches long, leaf-bladed, double edged. The handle is simply a thick tang, twisted, and thus is all one piece with the blade. In some cases, however, small wooden handles are added. [462] The women use these for many purposes—for peeling bananas, and preparing other foods for cooking; to cut monocotyledonous leaves for roofing, and to split the stem. In general, it is the all-purpose woman's tool.

412 177 439 The man's knife is larger and single edged, a kind of small machete, made in Germany. The Negroes obtain them from white men by trade and give them to the pygmies. I once tried giving them American machetes, of the kind prized in Central America, but they were too large and too heavy. 412 [313] [322] The men use these machetes for cutting lianas, tree limbs, and so forth. For small woodwork, however, such as whittling an arrow shaft, they are more likely to use an arrowhead or spearhead, which is nearer the right size.

Axes and the two kinds of knives and arrowheads and spearheads are the only cutting tools the pygmies have or know how to use.

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415 177 439 Also obtained from the Negroes are the cooking pots that all pygmy women own, essential for water storage and cooking. These pots are made by Negro women, and by relatively few Negro women at that; pottery making is a specialist occupation.

372 **Fire.**—The pygmies do not know how to make fire, nor do many of the Negroes with whom they are associated. Throughout all this countryside people keep fires going, and when one fire dies out the people will borrow it from each other. While on the march the pygmies carry glowing embers with them; they can keep a brand lighted for ten miles during a rainstorm. They do this by wrapping the burning ends in green leaves, and swinging it up and down; every two or three minutes they uncover it a bit and blow on it. At night these brands serve as torches. The Negroes have special wood which they use for torches but the pygmies do not. Their firewood is always fallen wood, and therefore always somewhat rotten and punky.

342 462 **Houses.**—When the pygmies have chosen a new camp, the women go out into the forest a little way to collect building materials. Each woman [824] brings in a bundle of sticks about half an inch thick, and from three to six feet in length; she also brings a bundle of sarcophrynium leaves. She thrusts the ends of the sticks in the ground around in a circle about five feet in diameter. Then she gets inside the circle, and bends opposite pairs of sticks inward, and ties them together. She does this in the following manner: first she takes a stick in each hand, then she brings them together, then she holds the two with one hand, and wraps with the other.

342 462 476 This technique is not easy; it is much easier if two women work together, and in practice this is usually the case. The first woman, who is to

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their activities and in their social organization in particular, since the degree to which cooperation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band.

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Net hunting.—The technique of net hunting can best be described by going through the chronological events of a single day. The details of where and how to hunt are decided during the usual evening conversation period the night before. The chief argument lies in the weather; if it is going to be dry it will be better for net hunting. Since it will sometimes rain for three days, then go two days without rain, it is a matter of some speculation and prediction whether or not it will rain on a given afternoon. In general the weather permits net hunting, for it usually does not begin to rain until 4:00 P.M., and by that time the pygmies often have enough game to make the day's work profitable. The season is also important, for during the dry season the fallen leaves crackling underfoot make such a noise that stalking is hard even for a tracker so expert as the pygmy. However, this condition is good for net hunting, since it is necessary that the game hear the hunters.

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The men, women, and children start out early in the morning, and the women carry their babies on their backs. The men carry the nets. These are made of cordage, about the same width as tennis nets, but a little longer. Since the length of the net is functional in the hunting, the pygmies keep it fairly constant. As one end rots away they add onto the other end, until an old net may eventually be largely replaced by these additions. However,
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the pygmies prefer new nets made by the Negroes and, furthermore, there are rarely enough nets to go around. Hence they frequently beg their hosts for more.

[P. 328-B]

224 rows in rapid sequence in the antelope's direction, and probably but one will hit him. The pygmy can do just as well by leaping on the animal barehanded, and either strangle it or kill it with a knife, and he often does this.

224 In his quiver the pygmy usually carries
411 two kinds of arrows, the first with
iron tips, which he generally uses on the
larger, antelope-size, animals, and
wooden-tipped ones which are poisoned,
and which he uses for monkeys.
He rarely shoots a monkey with an
iron-tipped arrow, through fear of
losing it. Each man makes his own
poison as well as his own darts. The
plants from which the poison is made
[824] are well known, and there is neither
ritual nor mystery attached to the process.
[137] The vital plant is a strophanthus;
they will mix other plants with it, but
they know which one does the trick.

The strophanthus poison is a heart
stimulant. Its action is not immediate.
The monkey runs along a bit, grows
weaker, and urinates. The pygmies
watch for this, for the moment of
224 urinating is the fatal one. If the
monkey is out on a limb where there
are no other branches, he will fall off;
if he is within reach of a lateral branch
or one rising upward, he will clutch it,
and the hunter will be obliged to climb
the tree if he wants the monkey. To
do this he uses the technique described
under pygmy locomotion. Since the
monkeys are usually high in the trees
and the pygmies are such poor marksmen,
they undoubtedly miss more of
them than they hit.

Elephant hunting.—Pygmy elephant
hunting involves a technique that
is wholly different from either of the
above two. The pygmy elephant hunter
is a specialist; not every pygmy has
the courage to face an elephant and kill
it, and not every man the skill. Whether
[177] or not pygmies ever killed elephants
in the early days, the present form of

[P. 330-A]

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ing a double profit. Slavery, therefore, was a by-product of these raids, and not the primary objective, which was to obtain ivory. When the white men came in, they said to the Negroes, "Why deal with these Arab slavers? Sell your ivory to us, and we will leave you alone." Thus, ivory became an important item to the Negroes, and the more they could get of it the better.

P 224 177 437 Z 439 563

The pygmy could never, by himself, kill enough elephants to stop them from trampling his host's gardens. He could, however, kill enough to swell his host's supply of ivory and increase his host's capital. So a pygmy who was an elephant hunter became a special favorite of his Negro host and would get special gifts and favors in return for the ivory.

P 411 Z [325]

The pygmy elephant hunter uses a special spear. Its handle is three to four feet long; its blade is leaf-shaped, of thin iron, about eight inches long and four wide. It is Negro-forged, of soft iron; the pygmy hunter sharpens it on a stone, until it is razor sharp.

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His technique of hunting is daring and simple, and takes as much skill as that of a Spanish matador. He tracks the elephant, which is not difficult, until he knows from the spoor that he is close to it. When he hears the elephant's bowels rumble, he goes along even more quietly, until he sees the elephant through the underbrush. He then approaches the elephant silently, up wind; he jabs his spear as far as he can into the elephant, gashing the belly just behind the ribs; then he pulls it right out again. The elephant at this point usually turns, and the pygmies say that if you as much as wink at this moment you are a dead pygmy.

The man stands stock still, so the elephant can't see him. Then he goes through a sequence of stab and jump and stand still, as many times as he can. Every time the elephant looks

[P. 331-A]

628 man, or even several men, may feel
574 picked on, or in other words are unable
to adjust themselves to the other members
of the group in which they live.
They will go on extensive visits to kinfolk
in other bands, and some may
never return. In this case they will
● [177] change their allegiance to new Negro
hosts. Or they may have trouble with
their Negroes and leave for this reason.

628 More frequently, however, a number
574 of families will simply visit another
602 camp, presumably because of the desire
of women to spend some time
with their parents, brothers, and other
relatives. The camps are exogamous
and the only chance a woman ordinarily
has to see her own people is on such
visits, during which the boys build up
ties with their maternal uncles and
[584] cousins. These visits, again, serve to
establish relationships leading to marriage.
Visits of this kind usually do
not last more than two or three months,
or the ordinary life of a camp site, but
they serve to keep the pygmy world in
a state or circulation, and to break up
the monotony of the limited sets of relations
possible among pygmies in a
single camp and between pygmies and
their specific Negroes.

595 **Marriage and divorce.**—The usual
582 form of pygmy marriage is monogamy.
One reason for this is the scarcity
of women—many prefer to become
second wives of Negroes and live in
the ease of the village, thus avoiding
the hardships of forest food gathering.
595 When a man does have two wives, one
will live with him, while the other will
live with her own kin, usually in a different
camp, where he visits her on occasion.
[581] Actually, the economic incentive
to polygyny is absent, for whatever
work the second wife performs benefits
her own kinfolk only.

583 Marriage takes place at or near puberty,
[582] and normally involves the technique
of exchange. In its present

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628 many new faces, and no doubt this in itself laid the groundwork for future matchmaking. For a month or so after marriage she would work for and with the other women of the camp, and then set up housekeeping on her own.

ILLNESS AND DEATH

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For most of his bodily ills the pygmy can find a local remedy. Gastric disorders and diarrhea plague them rather frequently. For these the universal cure is an enema (enemas are even used to produce abortions). Any pygmy, apparently, can give an enema to any other pygmy, but as a rule it is the women who give them to their husbands, children, and female friends. The instrument is a long reed with a gourd gummed on one end; the operator thrusts the other end into the patient's rectum and holds up the gourd end. The gourd is filled with various vegetable decoctions used in solution; these include the *tebvo* liana for diarrhea and *gorogoro* bark for stomach upsets.

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177 When a pygmy is suffering from some mysterious ailment which he and his fellows are unable to cure and which seems to be magical in nature, he will go to the village of his Negro hosts and beg the local witch doctor to cure him by sucking out "disease objects," by cupping with horns, or by the use of herbs.

165 The greatest single cause of mortality in the pygmy community is falling from a tree. When a pygmy falls from such a height, he has no real chance of survival, for there are seldom branches below him. The second most frequent cause of death is falling branches. As the pygmy camp is always constructed in the primary forest itself, never in a clearing, a branch falling in a windstorm may hit a house, killing four or five people at once.

[P.340-B]